



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 November 2024

by G Ellis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3635/D/24/3350321

10 Courtfield Road, Ashford, Middlesex TW15 1JR

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Edward and Sakina Dowling against the decision of Spelthorne Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 24/00426/RVC.
 - The development proposed is for amendment to planning permission no. 23/01475/HOU for the erection of a part two-storey, part single-storey side extension and single-storey rear extension with proposed extensions of existing front and rear facing dormers to allow alterations to the two-storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. No.10 is a semi-detached chalet bungalow with dormers to the front. It is located to the northern side of Courtfield Road, which comprises a mixture of semi-detached pairs of the same form as the appeal property and two-storey terraced houses. The pattern of development and the spacing between the buildings contributes to the character of the area.
4. Planning permission has been granted for a similar proposal (Council reference 23/01475/HOU) but with the first floor of the side extension offset from the boundary. This proposal would bring that element flush with the ground floor and adjacent to the boundary. The previous offset of 1m is the minimum separation distance for side extensions set out in the Council's Design of Residential Extensions and New Residential Development - Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The aim of the guidance is to avoid terracing.
5. The other half of the semi (No.12) does have a full width two-storey side extension, and therefore, there would be symmetry to the building. However, No.12 is positioned at the end of the row adjoining the rear gardens of properties in School Road. As such, the relationship and visual spacing to the side are not the same.
6. Whilst the scale of the development proposed through this amendment would be limited, it would eliminate the gap to the side of the property. Currently, the

neighbour to the other side, No.8, does not have a side extension, but if it were to be similarly extended, there would effectively be a visual joining of the properties, resulting in the loss of the semi-detached form.

7. I acknowledge that there are a few examples of such extensions along Courtfield Road, although they are not features which positively contribute to the street scene. The background to these in terms of their planning history and age relative to the SPD is not before me. Nonetheless, the SPD notes that poor existing extensions will not be accepted as a precedent, and these additions are not prevalent to have altered the prevailing pattern of development as a whole.
8. In conclusion, I find that the increased width of the extension would significantly diminish the spacing around the property to the detriment of its appearance and would fail to preserve the form and rhythm of the street scene. Thus, the development would be harmful to the character of the area and would be contrary to Policy EN1 of the Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document, and the SPD. Together and amongst other matters, these seek to ensure new development embodies high-quality design and is reflective of context and protective of local character, including the visual gaps between buildings.

Other Matters

9. I understand the appellant's desire to enlarge their home, and I appreciate the practicalities of aligning the ground and first floor and maximising space. Additionally, I acknowledge that there are no objections from the neighbours to the proposal and that it would not impact the residential amenities of the neighbouring properties. However, these matters do not outweigh the concerns and the conflict with the development plan which I have identified.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons set out and having regard to all other matters raised the appeal is dismissed.

G Ellis

INSPECTOR

