



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 March 2019

by **Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 April 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/V2255/D/19/3221434

30 Ferry Road, Iwade, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 8RR.

- 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 Mr Roger Ware-Lane against the decision of Swale Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 18/505113/FULL, dated 28 September 2018, was refused by notice dated 13 December 2018.
 - The development proposed is for a second storey addition over garage to side elevation. Pitched roof to match existing.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue to be the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property, number 30 Ferry Road, is one half of a semi-detached pair of two-storey dwellings. It is one of a number of similar semi-detached houses set back from Ferry Road. The neighbouring property, number 28, has been extended up to the boundary of number 30 by way of a single storey side extension, linked and attached garage. However, as I saw despite these ground floor additions generally there is a significant gap between the pairs of dwellings, particularly at first floor level, giving this side of the street an open and spacious appearance. In contrast the newer development on the opposite side of the road comprises terraced housing.
4. Further, as identified by the appellant, a significant proportion of the new housing development in Iwade likewise comprises terraced, link-detached and three-storey apartment blocks. From my observations on site, therefore, although contrasting with the new development, the openness of the semi-detached houses here represents the local distinctiveness of this side of the road.
5. In addition to the conversion of the garage into a utility room, toilet and additional kitchen space, the appellant proposes the construction of a first floor extension over the existing garage to provide an additional bedroom and

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Appeal Decision APP/V2255/D/19/3221434

- ensuite at first floor level. The addition would extend the building at first floor level virtually hard up to the boundary with number 28.
6. The proposed first floor addition would be set back behind the front wall of the existing dwelling and has been designed with a hipped roof the ridge of which is set down below that of the host property. In itself the proposed addition would be a well mannered design subservient to the semi-detached pair.
 7. The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance – *Designing an Extension – A Guide for Householders* (SPG) states that *where a two-storey side extension to a house is proposed in an area of mainly detached or semi-detached housing, the Council is anxious to see that the area should not become terraced in character, losing the sense of openness*. It goes on to advise that a gap of 2.0 metres between a first floor extension and the side boundary is normally required.
 8. I understand that the gap between the flank wall of number 30 as extended and the side boundary of number 28 at both ground and first floor level would in this case only be about 0.25 metres. Accordingly, even allowing for the staggered frontage, the hip roof form of the extension and the fact that the appeal property and its neighbours are set well back from the road, the proposal, as designed, would result in such a significant loss of openness in the street scene as to result in harm to the open and spacious character of the development here.
 9. My attention has been drawn to two recent appeal decisions APP/V2255/D/17/3187449 and APP/V2255/D/17/3187449 where it would appear from the limited information before me that not dissimilar side additions have been allowed. However, the circumstances surrounding these decisions appear to be different to this matter which, in any case, I have considered on its individual planning merits.
 10. I therefore conclude, in respect of the main issue, that the proposed two-storey side extension, by virtue of its projection to the side boundary at first floor level, would result in a harmful loss of openness between dwellings at first floor level, which would give rise to significant harm to the spacious character and appearance of the street scene. This would be contrary to Policies DM14 and DM16 of The Swale Borough Local Plan – Bearing Fruits 2031 (adopted July 2017) and to Para 5.0 of the Council's SPG as they relate to the need to reflect the positive characteristics of the site and locality and to reinforce or enhance as appropriate local distinctiveness.

Conclusions

11. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR