
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 June 2023

by H Lock BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd June 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/D/23/3316933

3 Stacey Close, GRAVESEND, Kent, DA12 5TD

- 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 Mrs Elizabeth Clements against the decision of Gravesham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref. 20221292, dated 6 December 2022, was refused by notice dated 30 January 2023.
 - The development proposed is the erection of single storey side extension, garage conversion, linking garage to main house.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of single storey side extension, garage conversion, linking garage to main house at 3 Stacey Close, GRAVESEND, Kent, DA12 5TD, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. 20221292, dated 6 December 2022, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 3SC-PL-05 Rev 01 (Location Plan); 3SC-PL-06 Rev 01 (Existing & Proposed Block Plan); 3SC-PL-02 (Proposed Floor and Roof Plans); and 3SC-PL-04 Rev. 01 (Proposed Elevations & Sections).
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the wider area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached single-storey dwelling with rooms in the extended roof space and a single-storey rear extension. It sits on rising ground, and a garage is cut into the slope of the rear garden. The attached property has also been extended to the rear, albeit in a slightly different footprint and design to the appeal proposal.

4. The main dwelling has a lower eaves line than the existing rear extension. By projecting further forward, the proposed side extension would interrupt the original eaves line and side gable, but I do not agree with the Council's view that this change would be dramatic. It may be more noticeable, but not dissimilar to the relationship between the main dwelling and rear extension; that addition has not harmed the character and appearance of the dwelling.
5. The viewpoints from which the extension would be seen in Stacey Close would be restricted by the siting of the host house and adjacent property, and the location towards the end of the cul-de-sac. Combined with being set back some distance from the front boundary, its visual impact on the street scene would be limited. In this context, the proposal would accord with the guidance in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 'Householder Extensions/ Alterations Design Guide' 2021 (SPD), that single storey side extensions should generally aim to appear subservient to the original building by lying behind the main front building line. Although the SPD discourages the use of flat roofs, I share the Council's view that in this instance this form would be acceptable as it would be set well back from the road.
6. I note the Council's view that the extension would be large, but as much would incorporate the existing garage it would not appear significantly greater than the existing structure when viewed from the public domain. Although the proposal would result in an increase in footprint and height compared to the existing garage, it would nevertheless appear subservient to the dwelling.
7. I therefore conclude that the proposal would be acceptable in its effect on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the wider area, in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014, which amongst other criteria requires the design, layout and form of new development to make a positive contribution to the street scene, the quality of the public realm and the character of the area. It would largely accord with the SPD, and would be sympathetic to the surrounding built environment as required by paragraph 130 c) of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conditions

8. In addition to the standard time limit, I have attached a condition specifying the approved drawings as this provides certainty. It is also appropriate to control materials to match the existing dwelling, in order to safeguard the character and appearance of the development and the area.
9. As much of the extension would be next to the garage of the neighbouring property, I do not consider a restriction on further openings in the northern elevation to be necessary. No evidence has been supplied to suggest a contamination risk that could not be addressed through compliance with Building Regulations. As this part of the site is already occupied by a garage and driveway, I do not find the suggested watching brief condition necessary.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

H Lock

INSPECTOR