



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 September 2012

by **Chris Frost BSc(Hons) DipLD FLI CBiol MSB MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 9 October 2012

Appeal Ref: APP/J1535/A/12/2177114

Treetops Care Home, 23-25 Station Road, Epping, Essex CM16 4HH

- 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 Treetops Care Home against the decision of Epping Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref: PL/EPF/0369/12, dated 21 February 2012, was refused by notice dated 9 May 2012.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a four storey extension following the demolition of an existing garage and store.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction of a four storey extension, following the demolition of an existing garage and store, at Treetops Care Home, 23-25 Station Road, Epping, Essex CM16 4HH in accordance with the terms of the application Ref: PL/EPF/0369/12, dated 21 February 2012, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions set out in the schedule to this decision.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect that proposed extension would have on the appearance, character and amenity of the area.

Reasons

3. Station Road has a mixed residential character with detached, semi-detached and terraced houses along with apartments and, on the appeal site, a care home. The Treetops Care Home has evolved, by way of past extensions, from what appears to have been one or two residential units into what is now a single building. There is some architectural unity that has been achieved by providing a colour washed exterior with matching roof treatments. To the north-west there is a recently constructed apartment building and to the south-east a terrace of 3-storey properties known as Woodlands. Together, this group of buildings present a substantial built frontage along Station Road and this is set behind a number of protected mature trees.
4. The proposed extension would consolidate this built frontage by closing the gap between the Treetops Care Home and Woodlands from its existing width of about 11.5m to about 3.5m. The proposed extension would match the external appearance of the Treetops Care Home and would be set back slightly from the

- main front elevation. The roof height would be lower than that of the parent building.
5. There is little doubt that the already substantial building at Treetops, which has a significant presence in the street scene, would become more substantial and significant if the proposed extension was to be built. However, this would be seen in the context of the very substantial building to the north-west and Woodlands to the south east, which also presents a substantial frontage to Station Road. In this context, the proposed addition, with its matching exterior and subservient position would not gain an inappropriate presence or appear out of place. Furthermore, the retention of a gap between the end of the extension and the site boundary would serve to preserve a feeling of separation from Woodlands. While existing Ginkgo trees to the rear of the extensions would become obscured, because of their position these trees are not prominent in the street scene. Accordingly, the shielding of these trees would not have a significant effect on the street scene.
 6. Saved policy DBE1 of the Epping Forest District Adopted Local Plan sets out what is required to help make new development acceptable. DBE1(i) deals with matters of architectural design. There is little to suggest that existing features are not adequately respected, particularly as the extension reflects aspects of the parent building such as external appearance, window details and roof details. DBE1(ii) deals with significance in the street scene and as I have already acknowledged the significance of the care home would increase. However, the extension would reflect the appearance of the parent building and would appear appropriate to its setting. DBE1(iii) deals with materials and these would be acceptable as they would replicate those of the parent building.
 7. Saved policy CP7 of the Epping Forest District Local Plan Alterations deals with urban form and quality. This has a number of aims including the protection and enhancement of urban areas and the avoidance of over-development and unsympathetic change. At CP7(iv) it also refers to the use of higher densities where compatible with the character of the areas concerned and urban design controls. Here a higher density of development would be achieved by extending an existing building in a way that reflects the form and character of the parent building. This would be in accord with CP7(iv). Otherwise, the changes proposed would be compatible with saved policy CP7 and while the care home, which is already a prominent feature of Station Road, would gain in prominence, there is good reason to find that the enlarged building would not appear out of context or otherwise excessive or unacceptable in terms of the appearance, character and amenity of the area.
 8. The compliance of the scheme with the development plan suggests that planning permission should be granted and the development would also be compatible with the aim of encouraging sustainable growth that is set out in the Nation Planning Policy Framework. There are no other matters that are sufficient to indicate that planning permission should be withheld.
 9. Various conditions are suggested. Other than time limits and compliance with plans, conditions are suggested in relation to:
 - a) window design on the flank elevation: this is necessary to protect privacy.
 - b) Matching materials: these are indicated on the plans so a separate condition is unnecessary.

- c) The protection of trees: this is necessary in the interests of visual amenity.
- d) Hours of construction; this is necessary in the interests of residential amenity.
- e) Wheel cleaning: this is necessary in the interests of highway amenity and safety.

Chris Frost

Inspector

Schedule of 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: 09-3319-05; 09-3319-06 A; 09-3319-09 C; 09-3319-10 B.
- 3) Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved, all window openings in the flank elevation shall be fitted with obscured glass and shall have fixed frames to a height of 1.7m above the floor of the room in which they are installed. Thereafter the windows shall be retained as constructed.
- 4) No development, including works of demolition or site clearance, shall take place until a Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement for the whole site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out only in accordance with the approved Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement, unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation.
- 5) No construction or demolition work and ancillary operations including vehicle movements on the site which are audible at the boundary of noise sensitive property shall take place outside the hours of: 08:00 to 18:30 Monday to Friday; 08:00 to 13:00 Saturday; and at no time during Sunday or Bank Holidays or Public Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.
- 6) No development shall take place until details of wheel washing and other cleaning facilities along with criteria for their use during construction have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter the approved cleaning facilities shall be installed prior to the commencement of development and used in accordance with the approved details, unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation.