

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 October 2016

by M Brookes BA MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 24 October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/16/3155268

11 Iveagh Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7PU

- 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 & Mrs C Harrison against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application, Ref. 16/P/00450, dated 3 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 11 July 2016.
 - The development proposed comprises single and two storey side and rear extensions, first floor front extension and single storey front extension incorporating integral garage, rooms in roof space with rear dormer and internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effects of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the appeal property and surrounding area and on living conditions at 9 and 13 Iveagh Road in terms of outlook, daylight and privacy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. Development in Iveagh Road comprises buildings of a variety of designs and widths. However they are predominantly detached, two-storey houses set back from the road beyond small, enclosed front gardens and with substantial undeveloped rear gardens. Roof heights are somewhat variable but generally step down from south to north to reflect the gradient along Iveagh Road. The roofs also largely slope up and away from side boundaries, leaving reasonable gaps between buildings above first floor eaves level. Windows are generally of traditional proportions and are predominantly positioned below first floor eaves level.
 4. These characteristics combine to create an area of generally harmonious character and appearance. The character of the appeal property itself is largely defined by long catslide roofs on either side of a distinctive forward-projecting wing which has a ground floor bay and a symmetrical front elevation.
 5. Saved Policy G5 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan (2003) (Local Plan) states that development proposals which do not comply with various criteria will not be permitted. These criteria include respecting established relationships with
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other buildings. Local Plan Policy H8 states that permission to extend a dwelling will be permitted subject to certain provisos including that it has no adverse effect on the scale and character of the dwelling or unacceptable effect on the existing context and character of the adjacent buildings and immediate surroundings.

6. The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance: Residential Extensions (2003) (SPG) includes general guidance that all extensions should aim to be subordinate to and to complement the size, shape and character of the existing property. They should also aim to fit into the general street scene, respecting the character of nearby buildings and the spaces between them (para. 2.2). More specifically the SPG states that the eaves of extensions at the side of properties should match those of the existing house (para. 3.10), that loft conversions should not substantially increase the roof volume (para. 3.11), and that new windows should match the size and position of those in the existing property (para. 4.1).
7. The proposed extensions would make significant changes to the scale, shape and character of the dwelling and to its relationship with other buildings.
8. The height of the appeal property close to the boundaries with the two adjacent houses would be significantly increased. On the northern side the eaves would be raised above the first floor eaves of the existing building, contrary to guidance in the SPG. This high eaves level would be a discordant feature in the street scene, where eaves are predominantly of a standard two-storey height or lower. This would be particularly noticeable because of the proximity of the raised eaves to the lower eaves on the lower ground at 13 Iveagh Road. On the southern side the eaves would be raised to first floor level, which would not be untypical in the road, but a substantial chimney would project closer to the side boundary and above eaves level.
9. These side extensions would remove both existing catslide roofs and undermine the prominence of the existing forward-projecting wing. They would also reduce the gaps between the appeal property and the two adjacent houses above normal first floor eaves level.
10. The raising of the main roof to create second floor accommodation would substantially increase the height and volume of the roof, contrary to SPG guidance. It would undermine the characteristic stepping-down of roof heights along the road and would result in a building with a very top-heavy appearance. The large dormer with full-height windows would also be an unduly dominant and unsympathetic addition to the rear roof slope and a feature that would be quite out of keeping in the area.
11. The windows in the front of the northern side extension would reflect neither the position nor proportions of the windows in the rest of the front elevation.
12. Although not without precedent in the road, the forward projection and wrap-around form of the proposed garage would further undermine the prominence, symmetry and integrity of the forward projecting wing of the existing building.
13. Overall, I find that the extensions would not be appropriately subordinate or complementary to the scale, shape or character of the existing dwelling. The extended building would also fail to respect established relationships with other buildings and the immediate surroundings in accordance with the Local Plan and would be a discordant feature of the street scene. In reaching these conclusions

I have had regard to extensions that have been carried out to other properties in Iveagh Road, but consider that they do not materially mitigate or justify the harm I have identified.

14. My conclusion on this first issue is that the proposed development would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the appeal property and surrounding area and would conflict with Local Plan Policies G5 and H8 and with guidance in the SPG. It would also conflict with one of the core principles in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) that planning should always seek to secure high quality design.

Living conditions at 9 and 13 Iveagh Road

15. The proposal includes an extension at ground floor, first floor and roof levels to the rear of the existing building. Although this would significantly increase the height and bulk of the rear of the building, which lies on higher ground than the property at 13 Iveagh Road, the rearward projection would be quite small and would be set off both side boundaries. I am therefore satisfied that the extension would not appear oppressive or materially affect the outlook from windows in the rear of either adjacent property or from their substantial rear gardens.
16. There is substantial landscaping along the boundary with the rear garden of 9 Iveagh Road which lies to the south. The extension would therefore result in very little increase in overshadowing of the rear windows or garden of that property. Overshadowing of 13 Iveagh Road would be more significant, but would also be quite limited and would not result in unacceptable living conditions in that property in terms of daylight.
17. The proposed full-height dormer window would have a Juliet balcony but no external standing area. It would be located well away from the boundaries with both adjacent properties and further than existing first floor rear-facing windows. I therefore agree with the Council that the development would not unacceptably harm privacy in either adjacent property.
18. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not have an unacceptable effect on living conditions at 9 or 13 Iveagh Road in terms of outlook, daylight or privacy. It would not therefore conflict in those respects with Local Plan Policies G1 (3) or H8 and the Council has not identified any specific conflict with the SPG. I also find that the development would not conflict with the core principle in the Framework that planning should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupiers of land and buildings.

Conclusion

19. The proposed development would not have an unacceptable effect on living conditions at 9 or 13 Iveagh Road in terms of outlook, daylight or privacy. However, it would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the appeal property and surrounding area and would conflict with the development plan when read as a whole. For that reason and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

M Brookes

INSPECTOR