
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 November 2016

by Richard Aston BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 20th December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/16/3159245

Sway Cottage, Forest Road, Surrey, East Horsley KT24 5BA

- 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 A & C Birks against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/P/01225, dated 12 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 1 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is two storey/single storey side and rear extensions and replacement garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached, two storey dwelling that when viewed from Forest Road appears of a modest and traditional scale, form and appearance. It appears to have been previously extended by a considerably large single storey extension to the rear. Forest Road is characterised by a variety of detached dwellings, predominantly set back from the highway, within substantial plots and amongst mature trees and landscaping.
 4. Access to the site is via an existing driveway from Forest Road that also runs to the side of the appeal site and gives access to two residential properties to the rear. In combination with the limited screening along its boundary with the access, I found that the appeal property sits in a much more open and spacious setting than neighbouring properties and is more conspicuous on the approach along this part of Forest Road.
 5. Although the extension would be set back from the front elevation, the ridge of the roof would be only slightly lower than the ridge of the existing roof and the width would be comparable to that of the existing dwelling. In combination with the scale, bulk and depth of the side extension and the large amount of additional roof slope and flank wall, sited much closer to the side boundary, it would result in a significant elongation of built form on the side of the host property. This would substantially change its character and appearance when viewed from the street and notwithstanding previous extensions, it would result
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in an overly large and unduly dominant addition that would not be in keeping with the form and scale of the host property.

6. Furthermore, given the siting of the host property and its prominence on this side of Forest Road, the proposal would reduce the existing space to the side boundary to such a degree that it would also erode the sense of openness and spaciousness of the appeal site. This would diminish the contribution that it currently makes to the character and appearance of this part of Forest Road and overall, it would not therefore represent a high standard of design.
7. For these reasons, the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the area. It would conflict with Policies G5 and H9 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 ('LP') and the Supplementary Planning Guidance Residential Extensions 2003 which, amongst other things, seek to ensure that development respects the scale, height and proportions of the surrounding environment and has no unacceptable effect on the scale and character of the dwelling and the immediate surroundings.
8. Although the LP pre-dates the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') I find these policies are consistent with it. Accordingly, the proposal would also conflict with the design objectives of the Framework.

Other Matters

9. The appellant has provided me with photographic examples of large detached dwellings within the area, although I have not been provided with the full details. Whilst large properties may well exist within the area, having determined the appeal on its own merits, as I am required to do, I have found harm and conflict with the development plan and the Framework. In my view, the presence of other large detached dwellings in the wider area does not outweigh or justify the harm that I have identified in relation to the main issue.
10. It would appear that pre-application advice was given but the Council's administration and determination of the application is not a matter for me to address as part of this appeal. I also note that there is an extant permission for a side extension and although it would appear to have been of a lesser depth, it would have been narrower¹ and the Council contend it was also lower in height. Moreover, I have not been provided with the full details and I therefore cannot be certain that it is directly comparable to the appeal proposal before me. In this particular case and on the evidence before me, it does not therefore alter my view in relation to the main issue.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan, when read as a whole and the Framework. Having considered all other matters raised, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Richard Aston

INSPECTOR

¹ 14.19m x 4.72m page 1 of appellant's Grounds of Appeal.