
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 January 2017

by Penelope Metcalfe BA(Hons) MSc DipUP DipDBE MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 24 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L3625/D/16/3163671

Beechwood, 56 Raglan Road, Reigate, RH2 0DY

- 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 and Mrs Martin McInroy against the decision of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01525/HHOLD, dated 28 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 21 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is demolition of dilapidated outdoor swimming pool and garage, construction of new front entrance, two storey side extension, single storey rear extension and detached garage.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for demolition of dilapidated outdoor swimming pool and garage, construction of new front entrance, two storey side extension, single storey rear extension and detached garage at Beechwood, 56 Raglan Road, Reigate, RH2 0DY, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/01525/HHOLD, dated 28 June 2016, and the plans submitted with it, 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: MB-1042/SK0100A, MB-1042/SK0105A, MB-1042/SK0110A, MB-1042/SK0115A, MB-1042/SK0107A, MB-1042/SK0101A, MB-1042/SK0108A, MB-1042/SK0109A, MB-1042/SK0122A, MB-1042/SK0120A, MB-1042/SK0121A, MB-1042/SK0126A, MB-1042/SK0106A, MB-1042/SK0127A, MB-1042/SK0125A and MB-1042/SK0128A.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building.

Main issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a detached two storey house located at the junction of Raglan Road and Alders Road in a well established residential area. The area is designated as a Residential Area of Special Character (RASC) because of its mix

of mainly detached houses in spacious plots with extensive mature landscaping. The house is set at an angle to the road in a large plot and is in a prominent position because of its corner location and because the land slopes down across the site from north to south.

5. I consider that the relevant policies in this case are Ho9 and Ho15 of the Reigate and Banstead Local Plan 2005 which require all residential development to meet several criteria, including that it should be designed to a high standard, make best use of the site, reinforce local distinctiveness and retain existing landscaping, and for proposals in RASCs, that they should also retain the spacing between buildings and the existing prominence of tree cover and spacious gardens. Policy CS4 of the Reigate and Banstead Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 applies similar criteria to development in valued townscapes.
6. The Reigate and Banstead Local Distinctiveness Design Guide 2004 (the Design Guide) provides detailed guidance for new residential and mixed development in all areas, including RASCs, to encourage good design in keeping with local character and landscape.
7. The appeal proposal includes a detached double garage to replace the existing attached garage. The Council has raised no objection to this and I see no reason to disagree as I consider that its design and location would be acceptable in the context.
8. The proposed two storey extension would be located at the east end of the house, replacing the existing dilapidated swimming pool and its fencing enclosure. I consider that it would result in a form of development which would not appear unduly out of scale with either the existing house or the site or the surroundings as a whole.
9. It would appear more as a single than a two storey storey element in the main views from Raglan Road because of the difference in levels across the site and because the lower floor would make use of the former swimming pool. The angle at which the house is set to Raglan Road is such that the formal front elevation faces up the hill rather than directly to the road and is obscured by the existing attached double garage and porch.
10. In my view, the remodelling of this front elevation including the new porch would result in an architecturally more cohesive form, of which the proposed extension would appear to be a natural continuation. The extension would appear as a large feature in views from Raglan Road, between approximately 2m and 5m closer to the road than the existing house, and would appear more prominent than the existing fence around the pool. However, the fence itself is already a relatively dominant feature and I consider that the proposal would not be unacceptable in the context of the open, spacious character of the surrounding development.
11. The house appears especially prominent in views from the north and east partly, I understand, because mature trees which previously screened this side of the site were either removed for insurance purposes or fell in gales. The remaining two trees on the Raglan Road frontage are poor specimens, and their loss would have a limited impact in the wider context of both the immediate area and the new planting proposed by the appellants to reduce the sense of exposure of the house to the street. In my view, this landscaping would

enhance the appearance of the site and be in keeping with the character of the RASC. The extension would also be visible in views from Alders Road, but it would be less prominent because the views would be from a greater distance and partially screened by a mixture of trees and other vegetation within the site.

12. I have taken account of the two neighbouring properties, Nos. 50 and 54 Raglan Road which have been extended, the former in the 1980s and the latter in 2015. They are both set at an angle to the road, as is No. 56, with their closest points approximately 4m-5m from the road. In my view, this allows for some scope for planting to mitigate the impact of the proximity of the corner of each house to the road. I consider that the particular angle at which No. 56 is set and the relocation of the garage would provide a greater opportunity for landscaping than, for example, at No. 54 which is set at a shallower angle, even though the corner of No. 56 would be closer to the road.
13. I consider that the proposal would be compatible with the existing low density, spacious and landscaped character of the RASC and would maintain the existing prominence of tree cover and spacious gardens. In many of the long views of the site, large trees in the surrounding properties would remain more prominent than the proposed extension. The design would make good use of the different levels across the site, it would not be out of scale with the surroundings and there would be scope for improving the landscaping.
14. I conclude that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the area and that it would be consistent with local plan policies Ho9 and Ho15, CS4 of the Core Strategy and the advice in the Design Guide.

Conditions

15. I have considered the conditions put forward by the Council, having regard to the tests set out in the Framework. A condition detailing the plans is necessary to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and for the avoidance of doubt. A condition relating to the materials is necessary in order to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development.

PAG Metcalfe

INSPECTOR