
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 January 2017

by Elaine Gray MA(Hons) MSc IHBC

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

Decision date: 03 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/W/16/3160647

11 Icklingham Road, Cobham KT11 2NG

- 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 Meadway Homes against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2016/1598, dated 10 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 27 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is construction of a five bedroom detached house with integral garage following the demolition of the existing dwelling and garage.
-

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 surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site at 11 Icklingham Road is located within a predominantly residential area, and is currently occupied by a single detached dwelling which would be replaced with a new dwelling and garage.
 4. The Council's document entitled 'Elmbridge Local Plan Design and Character Supplementary Planning Document' (SPD, April 2012) sets out principles for the design of new development, and states that massing will play a large part in determining the character of the building and its appropriateness.
 5. No 11 is located within the Burhill Estate, which the SPD 'Companion Guide: Cobham, Oxshott, Stoke D'Abernon & Downside' describes as a private estate of large mostly two storey houses set in very large plots. The development would be of two storeys, and would be of a similar height and design to a number of nearby buildings. The proposal would include a garage which would project to the front of the house, and I note that a number of houses in the area have a similar feature. In those respects, the development would reflect the characteristics found in the vicinity.
 6. However, as the Companion Guide suggests, the grain of development is informed by dwellings whose footprints take up a proportionately small area of the associated plots. This layout gives spaciousness to the area which is a key part of its character. The plot of No 11 is narrower than those of the adjoining
-

properties, and the existing dwelling is proportionate to the size of its garden. By contrast, the development would have a significantly larger footprint in relation to the plot, and would thus depart from the prevailing pattern of development in the area. It would therefore conflict with the SPD's advice on massing, and its requirement to have regard to the typical percentage of building footprint to site area.

7. The existing dwelling sits almost centrally on the plot, with a slight offset towards the north-west boundary. The low single storey elements to either side of the main two storey section are visually unobtrusive, and maintain the generous gaps between No 11 and its neighbours, in particular, Derwent House (9 Icklingham Road) to the south-east. The new two storey section of the development would sit much closer to the south-east boundary and No 9, substantially eliminating the existing gap between the houses. As a result, the new house would appear cramped within its boundaries, and at odds with the more spacious character of nearby properties. It would be an uncharacteristic and incongruous form of development which would be out of keeping with its surroundings.
8. My attention has been drawn to examples of developments on Icklingham Road where the distances to the plot boundaries have been relatively small. However, each proposal is to be considered on its individual merits, and these examples have not led me to a different conclusion on the appeal scheme.
9. I accept that the proposal would satisfy the minimum SPD guidelines in terms of spatial separation. However, the SPD also recommends that significantly more than 1m should be left at the boundary where this would preserve the character of the area. I also accept that the site is not subject to any special designations, but this would not override the requirement of Policy DM2 of the Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan (DMP, April 2015) to have particular regard to the prevailing pattern of built development in each case.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposal would unduly harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would thus conflict with DMP Policy DM2 insofar as it requires development to preserve or enhance the character of the area. It would also conflict with the requirements of the SPD, and of the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to secure high quality design.

Other Matters

11. On my visit, I viewed the appeal site from the back of the neighbouring property at Summerhays, to the south-west. Although the proposal would bring the built form closer to the boundary of Summerhays, a separation of approximately 40m would be maintained. This would be adequate to protect the living conditions at both properties, in the event that the proposal were to be found otherwise acceptable.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons above, and taking all other matters into consideration, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Elaine Gray

INSPECTOR