
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 January 2017

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 16 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L3625/W/16/3161546

22 Earlswood Road, Redhill, Surrey RH1 6HW

- 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 Hooper Curry Hamilton LLP against the decision of Reigate & Banstead Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01628/F, dated 8 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is conversion and extension of the existing detached dwelling to create 7 x 1 bedroom apartments, including provision of parking spaces, private and communal amenity space and landscaping.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council's decision included reasons for refusal relating to insufficient car parking and to the lack of provision for affordable housing. The Council has reviewed its position in relation to these matters and now no longer wishes to pursue these reasons

Main Issues

3. In light of the above, the main issues in this appeal are;
 - The effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area
 - The effects of the proposal on neighbours
 - Whether the proposed flats offer adequate living accommodation.

Reasons

The effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area

4. The appeal relates to this detached 3 storey building located within a mainly residential area. The area contains a variety of building styles, although mainly of 2 or 3 stories. The appeal property dates from the Victorian era, is of a traditional design with a pitched roof, and brick and render elevations. Along with a rear extension, the proposal includes alterations to the roof to increase its overall height and to increase the angle of the pitch, plus other alterations. The Council's submitted documents conclude in relation to the effects on the

area generally, that it is the roof alterations that they object to, although some sections describe the other extensions

5. The proposal would see the loss of the front gable and the formation of a large flat-roofed area, with steeper pitched sections. The increase in overall height would mean that the roof would be as high as No 20, which is higher up the sloping ground here. In my judgement, the roof would appear bulky and awkward as a result of the steeper pitch and the presence of the flat section and loss of the ridge. The building would appear top-heavy and, as a result of the proposal it would fail to harmonise with the other properties in the area. I have taken account of the varied styles of buildings in the area, including the flats opposite where dormers are present, but I conclude that the proposal would appear starkly different and harmfully at odds with the character of the area. For these reasons, the proposal is contrary to Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy and Policies Ho9, Ho13 and Ho16 of the Local Plan.
6. In relation to the other extensions proposed, whilst they may be considered as sizeable, I find no direct effects on the character of the area generally. Therefore, they do not add to my findings in relation to this particular issue.

The effects of the proposal on neighbours

7. The proposed lower ground floor extension would be around 2.2m deep adjacent to No 20 and 2.6m deep adjacent to No 24, according to the plans. The extensions to the upper ground and first floor would be to the same overall depth at the middle of the rear elevation but would be stepped away from each side boundary.
8. The rear elevation of No 20 is set further forward than the appeal building, at this point and the proposed extension will exaggerate this difference. The proposal would extend beyond the lower ground floor at No 20 by 5.8m, according to the Council's figures. Even though the upper ground and first floors would be set away from the boundary, I consider that the proposal would appear dominating when seen from No 20, due to the depth, height and proximity of the extension. Whilst I can see that some effort has been made to reduce these effects, in my judgement, they would not be sufficient to protect the living conditions of those neighbours. Therefore, the proposal is contrary to Policies Ho9 and Ho13 of the Local Plan.

Whether the proposed flats offer adequate living accommodation

9. I have given detailed consideration to this matter and have studied the proposed layout of the units and the sizes of the various rooms, as referred to by the main parties. Whilst it is undoubtable that some of the units could be described as small, it is notable in my mind that the Council seems to accept that they all exceed the nationally described space standards.
10. From my consideration of the evidence submitted, I do not consider that there is sufficient evidence to dismiss the appeal based on the small size of some of the proposed flats.

Conclusions

11. The proposal would bring about a general improvement in the appearance of the building and would provide additional homes in an accessible location. However, I find that these and other benefits are outweighed by the

unacceptable effects on the character and appearance of the area and on the living conditions of neighbours at No 20 Earlswood Road. As a consequence, the appeal is dismissed.

S T Wood

INSPECTOR