

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 February 2017

by Les Greenwood MRTPI

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

Decision date: 10 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C3620/D/16/3164988

33 Kingscroft Road, Leatherhead KT22 7BU

- 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 Shane Gengasamy against the decision of Mole Valley District Council.
 - The application Ref MO/2016/1165/PLAH was refused by notice dated 5 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is a double storey side extension as well as a 4 metre single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matter

2. The description of the proposed development set out above is extracted from the longer description on the application form. I have omitted some sections that deal with the reasons for the proposal rather than describing the development, but have taken these into account in making this decision.

Main issues

3. The main issues are the effects of the proposal on:
 - i) the character and appearance of the house and this part of Kingscroft Road; and
 - ii) living conditions at neighbouring properties.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. Kingscroft Road is a residential street of mainly semi-detached houses with hipped roofs. Nos 33 and 31 are typical in this regard, a pair of hipped roof semis with garages to the side. Beyond the garage at No 33 is a public footpath and then No 35, which is set much farther back from the street. The proposal would replace the garage at No 33 with a gabled 2 storey side extension stretching almost to the side boundary, plus a single storey lean-to extension to the rear.
 5. Many of the houses here have 2 storey side extensions, either with hipped roofs or with flat roofs hidden behind dummy pitches. The introduction of a full
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gable on the side wall would fail to reflect both the general character of the area and the architectural character of this pair of houses. The extension would not be set down from the main roof line or set back at the front, so that the side gable would be a much larger wall than existing. This would be a bulky, unsympathetic addition to the house. It would also be prominent in the street scene, in part because the set back of No 35 next door allows views of the side of No 33 from a long section of Kingscroft Road, especially in months when the street trees are not in leaf.

6. The 2 storey side extension would also sit next to and tower over the footpath. Although this impact in itself would not be unacceptable, it does add to the overall visual impact. I saw no other comparable extensions in the immediate vicinity. The appellant refers to 16 Kingscroft Road, but that extension is much different. It is in a less visible position, is half-hipped and is set back from the front wall of the main house.
7. The proposed single storey extension to the rear would have very little impact on public views and would be unobjectionable in this respect. I conclude, however, that the proposed 2 storey side extension would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the building and this part of Kingscroft Road due to its position, bulk and unsympathetic design. This element of the proposal therefore conflicts with the aims of Mole Valley Core Strategy Policy CS14, Mole Valley Local Plan (LP) Policies ENV22 and ENV32 and the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) *Design Guidance for House Extensions*, to ensure that extensions retain the character of the existing property, are appropriate in terms of scale, form and appearance and respect the character of the area. These aims are in line with the National Planning Policy Framework's emphasis on securing high quality design that reinforces local distinctiveness.

Living conditions

8. The proposed 2 storey side extension would sit within the main field of vision of a ground floor living room and other windows at the front of No 35, but at sufficient distance so that it would not be overbearing or significantly overshadowing in relation to that property.
9. On the other side, the proposed single storey rear extension would be built up to the boundary with No 31, close to some ground floor windows and glazed doors. The rear extension would stretch 4m to the rear, cutting across a 45 degree line drawn from the mid-point of the glazing. At its highest point, it would also sit above a 25 degree line drawn in the vertical plane from the bottom of the closest window, in conflict with the detailed guidance of the SPG. Nevertheless, the lean-to form of the extension means that the height drops away markedly to the rear, minimising this impact. No 31 would retain a largely open, sunny outlook at the back.
10. Neighbours' privacy would not be significantly affected. I conclude that living conditions at neighbouring properties would not be unduly harmed. The proposal therefore accords in this respect with the aim of LP Policies ENV22 and ENV32 and the SPG, to ensure that development does not significantly harm the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. It would furthermore accord with the Framework's aim to secure a good standard of amenity for all.

Conclusion

11. I recognise the appellant's reasonable wish to refurbish and improve this house to provide a family home. This is not, however, sufficient to override my concerns in regard to the first main issue. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

Les Greenwood

INSPECTOR