

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 March 2017

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 24 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/17/3168603

35 Red Lane, Claygate, Surrey KT10 0ES

- 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 Robert Buskell against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
 - The application, Ref. 2016/2140, dated 24 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 26 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of the existing garage and construction of a two storey side addition to the existing residential property.
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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 pair of semi-detached houses (Nos. 33 & 35) and the street scene of this part of Red Lane.

Reasons

3. I saw on my visit that Nos. 33 and 35 Clay Lane form a pair of attractive early C20th dwellings with a symmetrical front elevation. This symmetry of the two storey buildings has been preserved to almost the last detail since their construction and as a result the pair make a particularly positive contribution to the character and appearance of this part of Red Lane. This is to some extent spoilt by the attractive and in keeping appearance of the garage to the flank of No. 33 not being matched by the larger and more obtrusive garage at the side of No. 35 and the view of the extensions to the side / rear of the property. However, because of their single storey form these additions do not materially reduce the visual attributes of Nos. 33 and 35 as a matching pair.
 4. Immediately to the west are two other pairs of symmetrical semi-detached dwellings in the form of Nos. 29 & 29a and 31 & 31a, which although quite recent developments are also positive features in the street scene through a combination of the quality of the design and the exact symmetry of each pair. It seems reasonable to assume that the symmetry of the design of these four houses owes much to the example of Nos. 33 & 35. However, even if I am wrong on this point, the fact remains that because of their appearance Nos. 29 through to 35 read together to form a distinctive enclave within an area of
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much more varied dwellings. (The latter are accurately described and also illustrated by photographs in the grounds of appeal).

5. The effect of this enclave combines with the merit of Nos. 33 & 35 to impose a significant constraint on alterations or additions to the front and flanks of either dwelling. I acknowledge that the appeal scheme has attempted to achieve the required subservience through a set back of the front elevation and a substantial set down of the ridge, as well as a reduction in width and a couple of other design features. In many cases this may have been sufficient, but in this particular instance the eye would be drawn to the two storey addition as a harmful imbalance to the symmetry of the pair and its context of two other symmetrical pairs to the west.
6. The grounds of appeal refer to the mixed appearance of the dwellings in the locality, many of which have had substantial two storey side additions. However, because of the special quality of the appeal building and the consistency of design in the form of a primacy of symmetry of its neighbours on the north side of the road up to its junction with Old Claygate Lane, I do not consider these other houses to be particularly pertinent to the main issue in this appeal.
7. Overall, I conclude that the proposed two storey side addition would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the pair of semi-detached houses and the street scene of this part of Red Lane. This would be in harmful conflict with Policies CS11 & CS17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011; Policy DM2 of the Elmbridge Local Plan: Development Management Plan 2015; the Council's 'Design and Character - Home Extensions' SPD 2012, and Section 7: 'Requiring Good Design' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.
8. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR