

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: 31 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L3625/D/17/3168394

104 Balcombe Road, Horley RH6 9BW

- 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 William Gibbs against the decision of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.
 - The application, Ref. 16/01969/HHOLD, dated 23 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a detached 3 car garage to the front area.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed garage on the character and appearance of the Balcombe Road street scene.

Reasons

3. I saw on my visit that for the most part this stretch of Balcombe Road has a pleasingly spacious character with the properties' front boundaries often featuring mature trees and high hedges and the substantial detached houses set well back from the road frontage. I therefore consider that in general it is important to maintain the absence of substantial buildings, albeit ancillary in nature and subordinate in scale to the host dwelling, so as to preserve this perception of space.
 4. That said, there are already exceptions, with the garage next door to the appeal property at No. 106 and a couple of other frontage buildings at other houses diagonally across the road near the gated entrance drive to Brookwood Park. However, none of these buildings appears as being prominent in the street scene because of the tree and hedge screening and to an extent their hipped roofs.
 5. The appeal property does not have mature screening and is therefore more open to view, albeit that the lower section of wall either side of the entrance does permit views of the shed roof, which with its light colour draws the eye as being somewhat unsightly and incongruous. The proposed garage would be positioned immediately to the south east of the current position of the shed (to be removed) and with its larger size would therefore be easily seen in southward views along the road. Even more prominent in the street scene
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would be the gable end of the garage proposed as a replacement for part of the boundary wall.

6. Drawing these points together I consider that having regard to the existing wall and shed and the other frontage buildings already referred to, it is not the principle of a garage on this particular site that is the legitimate concern, but rather its size, design and closeness to the front boundary. The combination of the large scale of the building as a triple garage, its design with a gabled roof facing directly onto the public realm, and a siting actually on the front boundary, would outweigh the factors in its favour and result in it being unacceptably obtrusive.
7. On balance, I conclude that even allowing for the favourable aspects of the scheme, and the further advantage of an adjoining large tree forming a backdrop to any new building, the proposed garage in its present form would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the Balcombe Road street scene. This would be in harmful conflict with Policies Ho9, Ho13 & Ho16 of the Reigate and Banstead Borough Local Plan 2005; the Council's Householder Extensions & Alterations Supplementary Planning Guidance 2004, and Section 7: 'Requiring Good Design' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.
8. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR