The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 April 2017

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 10 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/17/3170672
2 St. Martins Drive, Walton-On-Thames, KT12 3BW

- 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 Gordon Tiffin against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
- The application Ref 2016/3179, dated 12 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 6 December 2016.
- The development proposed is a first floor side extension.

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 host property and the locality.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is a two storey detached dwelling with a gable front and a cat slide single storey element to one side. It is of pleasing appearance and reflects the asymmetrical design of most dwellings in this area of established residential character and attractive suburban aesthetic. The proposal is as described above and would provide for dressing space off a bedroom with a car port and covered entrance to the main side door below.

4. The design approach selected by the Appellant is based around adding a new area of upper floor with a hipped roof over, with a vertical wall elevation to the front, and an additional single storey hipped roof projecting element to its side linking into the planned vertical wall there. Unfortunately the new structure would look very ill-at-ease and disjointed. The cat slide side element is a subtle, characteristic, and attractive one, whereas this scheme would remove that from view and replace it with a top heavy structure which would bear little relationship to the host property or the design of those found locally. The abutment points between old and new would look awkward and the design as a whole would appear contrived and lack harmony with the appeal property. Even with a pitched roof the seemingly suspended, over-prominent, box-like structure would be very jarring on the eye and alien in the streetscene.

5. Policy DM2 of the Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015 and Policy CS 17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011, taken together and amongst other matters, seek to ensure new development embodies high quality design, respects a host building, reflects local character and exemplifies local distinctiveness. For the reasons given above I conclude that there would be conflict with these policies. The policies have objectives that are also reflected in the Council's Design and Character SPD 2012 and the scheme would, additionally, run contrary to this document.

Other matters

6. I sympathise with the Appellant's wish to increase and improve the accommodation of this property. I note that there was not objection from neighbours. Whilst the area is mostly broadly homogenous in design terms I did note some instances of first floor extensions and alterations locally, including those close by and specifically drawn to my attention, but would consider that they are not directly comparable by reason of their detailed design. Almost without exception upper level work to the side of other properties maintains or replicates the cat slide appearance towards the front elevation. I can see that thought has been given in terms of selection of materials to seek to achieve a lighter weight of appearance and I fully appreciate the reasoning for keeping space underneath. I note that the Appellant offers to amend the roof form but I have to determine the scheme before me. I have carefully considered all the points raised by the Appellant but these matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to the main issue identified above.

7. I confirm that policies in the National Planning Policy Framework have been considered and the development plan policies which I cite mirror relevant objectives within that document.

Overall conclusion

8. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality. Accordingly the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR