

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 July 2017

by Mr Kim Bennett BSc DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 02 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/17/3176898

70 Guildford Park Avenue, Guildford GU2 7NL

- 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 Professor Martin Parr against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 17/P/00541, dated 8 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 26 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is a two storey 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 dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property comprises an end of terrace three storey house located on the corner of a small cul de sac leading off Guildford Park Avenue. There is a similar three storey terrace directly opposite and the area is characterised as wholly residential with a mixture of two and three storey properties of similar designs.
4. A previous proposal for a three storey extension to the side of the appeal property was dismissed in January 2017 (the 2017 appeal)¹, the Inspector finding that there would be harm caused by the width of the proposed extension adjacent to the highway, its dominance and the fact that it would break an established building line currently formed by the end gables of numbers 54, 56 and 70. In response to that decision, the appellant considers that the revised two storey design is more subservient in scale and introduces tile hanging at first floor to soften the impact of the extension.
5. However, although the proposed extension would be less dominating, the fact that it would extend well past the rear of the property and with a hipped roof which would be at odds with the prevailing gable ended character of roof forms within the area, would in my view make it appear an incongruous addition and poorly related to the host dwelling given its prominent location which is clearly

¹ Appeal Reference APP/Y3615/D/16/3156387

visible from both directions. Whilst tile hanging would lessen the impact of an unrelieved brick wall, it would still have a somewhat dominating presence adjacent to the back edge of the footpath. Additionally, the proposed extension would still break the clearly defined building line established by the existing property and the other end of terrace properties at numbers 54 and 56, and I agree with my colleague that such a feature is important to the character of the area in terms of providing some space between the end of terraces and the adjoining highway. Although the terrace of Nos 36-46 (evens) would be slightly longer, as my colleague identified, the relationship of that terrace to the road is different from the appeal proposal.

6. I note that new properties have been created at numbers 27a and 41a Guildford Park Avenue, but both relate to an extension of the existing terrace in a similar form and height, and do not extend to the back edge of the footpath. The situations are therefore not directly comparable. I have also been referred to other extensions to properties within the estate, but they are not as prominent in the street scene as the appeal property, and in the case of the extension to No 72, from a design point of view it relates poorly to the existing property in my view, and is not a good reason to allow an extension which would also cause harm in design terms, albeit for different reasons.
7. I acknowledge that the proposed accommodation would apparently provide additional accommodation for students studying at the nearby university and agree it would be well located in that respect. However the appellant's suggestion that this would increase economic activity within the area is somewhat overstated in my view, given that an additional two bedrooms only would be provided. In any event, I attach greater weight to the visual harm that would be caused to the character of the area by the proposed extension.
8. In terms of potential impact to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 68 Guildford Park Avenue, I agree with both main parties that the relationship would be acceptable. Finally, although reference has been made to an extension that could be made under permitted development rights, there is no evidence before me that such a proposal is a realistic alternative prospect and in any event it would raise significantly different issues than those presented by the current proposal.
9. I note the appellant's reference to alleged misrepresentation of issues within the officer's report, but I have reached my findings based on matters of fact, the submitted plans and my own observations at my site visit.
10. For the above reasons, the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of both the host dwelling and the surrounding area. It would therefore be contrary to saved Policies G5 and H8 of the Council's Local Plan 2003 in that it would not respect existing street patterns and would have an unacceptable effect on the existing context and character of adjoining buildings. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

Kim Bennett

INSPECTOR