

## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 August 2017

**by R C Shrimplin MA(Cantab) DipArch RIBA FRTPI FCI Arb MCIL**

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

**Decision date: 11 August 2017**

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### **Appeal Reference: APP/C3620/D/17/3177096**

### **9 The Green, Fetcham, Leatherhead KT22 9XE**

- 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 M Lane against the decision of Mole Valley District Council.
  - The application (reference MO/2017/0385/PLAH, dated 2 March 2017) was refused by notice dated 25 May 2017.
  - The proposed development is described in the application form as follows: *"Demolition of a detached double garage with dual pitched roof, built to the boundary. Construction of a part 2 storey, part single storey side extension – extension to be set back, set away from the boundary and with a lower pitch to the main house. Retaining parking for 2 to 3 cars to the front, with reinstatement of existing drop curb / car port to South side of the plot for additional parking"*.
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### **Decision**

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### **Main issue**

2. The main issue to be determined in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character of the surroundings.

### **Reasons**

3. The appeal site lies within a relatively modern residential development that has an interesting informal layout, with a range of road types, and The Green provides an attractive open space that provides a focus for the locality. The development has a spacious character, with a variety of house types in different parts of the layout. The houses are designed in conventional forms, using traditional materials, and they create a harmonious environment.
4. Number 9, The Green is a large house, faced with brickwork and vertical tile hanging, under a tiled roof. It stands at the corner of The Green and Ten Acres and looks across the open space of The Green, like its immediate neighbours to the north, which are similarly substantial properties. It is set back from the road, behind its front garden, and it has the benefit of a private back garden.
5. The appeal site includes a large, single storey double garage to the north of the house and it is now proposed that this should be demolished and replaced by an extension to the house. The new extension would be built in a style and

- using materials that would be complementary to the existing house. It would provide new independent living areas on the ground floor, with two new bedrooms and a bathroom on the first floor. The new accommodation would be internally linked to that in the existing house by a single door between the new kitchen and the existing utility room (currently a "back door" to the existing house).
6. Among other things, the 'National Planning Policy Framework' emphasises the aim of "requiring good design" in the broadest sense (notably at Section 7) and it points out the importance of creating an attractive streetscape and maintaining the overall quality of the area.
  7. Local Policies reflect the desirability of maintaining environmental quality. In particular, Policy C14 of the 'Mole Valley Local Development Framework Core Strategy DPF' focusses on the character of an area where new development is proposed, while Policies ENV22, ENV23 and ENV24 likewise focus on protecting existing character and avoiding "overdevelopment". Policy ENV32 of the 'Mole Valley Local Plan' imposes similar considerations specifically in respect of house extensions.
  8. Of course, both local and national policies are also intended to ensure that good use is made of urban land.
  9. The proposed extension would add very significantly to the scale of the existing house and would create a large bulky construction on the plot. It would change the character of the existing property by effectively creating a second dwelling on the site, with only a tenuous connection to the existing house.
  10. The existing garage would be lost and, although parking spaces would be available on the frontage of the property, these spaces would serve a much larger dwelling. The creation of an additional parking space in the rear garden would have an unsatisfactory impact on the living conditions of the occupiers.
  11. Fundamentally, the bulk and scale of the finished building would be unduly dominant in the streetscene and the effectively independent nature of the proposed extension would undermine the character of the surrounding area. A cramped and unattractive development would be created. For these reasons, the project would conflict with both national and local policies, notably those policies which have been referred to above that are intended to protect local character and which are aimed at achieving good design.
  12. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area, which is "sustainable" in planning terms. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the harm that would be done to the character of the surroundings and to the quality of the streetscene obviously outweighs the benefits of the project. Hence, I have concluded that the scheme before me ought not to be allowed and, although I have considered all the matters that have been raised in the representations, I have found nothing to cause me to alter my decision.

*Roger C Shrimplin*

INSPECTOR