
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 October 2017

by Daniel Hartley BA Hons MTP MBA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 01 November 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/17/3180065
12 Courtleas, Cobham, Surrey KT11 2PW

- 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 Akis Tzortzis against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2016/1784, dated 27 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 15 June 2017.
 - The development proposed is extensions and alterations to convert a single storey house into a two storey house incorporating front and rear dormer windows and alterations to fenestration.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I have taken the description of development from the Council's decision notice and appellant's appeal form as this more accurately describes the appeal proposal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a detached bungalow which is set within a spacious plot within a cul-de-sac of residential properties. Whilst there are some two storey dwellings at the entrance to Courtleas the cul-de-sac of properties essentially comprises a collection of bungalows with front roof slopes that are devoid of dormers.
5. It is proposed to increase the roof height of the existing dwelling from about 4.8 metres to a maximum ridge height of approximately 6.3 metres including two storey front and rear extensions. In the proposed front roof slope there would be four pitched roofed dormers and the two storey rear extension would comprise a series of four gables extensions. In respect of the overall height of the proposed development, the Council raises no objection to the proposal. I have no reason to disagree with the views of the Council in respect of height of the development, particularly as planning permission has already been

approved (Ref 2015/0600) for the raising of the pitched roof by about 1.5 metres and the squaring off of the existing dwelling. However, unlike the aforementioned planning permission, the appeal proposal would include four pitched roof dormers in the front roof slope.

6. I consider that the aforementioned front roof dormers would detract from the character and appearance of the bungalows in the immediate cul-de-sac which have roofs that are simple and in the main unbroken. I accept that the resultant property would only be partly visible within the cul-de-sac given its set back from the main road and the intervening landscaping. However, in the winter months when the vegetation is without leaf, the property would be more visible from the main road. Furthermore, the appeal dwelling is very conspicuous when viewed from the shared drive with No 14 Courtleas. The latter property also has a simple and unbroken front roof line.
7. When considered in the context of the other dwellings in the immediate area (including No 14 Courtleas), the proposed front roof dormers would have the effect of creating a residential property which has the appearance of being two storey and where the roof slope is not simple and unbroken. Consequently, the resultant dwelling would not assimilate well into this part of Courtleas and hence significant harm would be caused to the character and appearance of the area.
8. I note that the Council has allowed dormers elsewhere in Courtleas and the appellant has referred me to approved plans for Nos 2, 3, 4, 8, 9 and 10 Courtleas. However, these dormers relate to the rear of properties and so are not directly comparable with the development proposed for the front roof slope of the appeal property.
9. I acknowledge that the rear of the appeal property is not as conspicuous in the public realm when compared with its front. It is perhaps for this reason that the Council has allowed a number of rear additions and extensions to other properties in Courtleas. However, I am not aware of any development in the area which is similar to that proposed for the rear of the appeal property.
10. The proposal would include four very large projecting rear gables which collectively would appear dominant, bulky and imposing on the rear of the dwelling. Furthermore, the roof form/shape at the rear of the property would appear discordant and contrived and would not represent good design. Whilst the rear of the dwelling would not be very conspicuous in the public realm, given the existence of large evergreen boundary planting, I do not consider that this obviates the need to achieve good design as outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Indeed, one of the 12 core planning principles in the Framework is that planning should *"always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings"*.
11. For the collective reasons outlined above, I conclude that the proposal would have a significantly detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, the proposal would not accord with the design aims of Policies CS10 and CS17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011; Policy DM2 of the Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015; the Elmbridge Design and Character Supplementary Planning Document 2012 and Chapter 7 of the Framework.

Other Matters

12. I recognise the appellant's desire to increase floor space and that the proposal would widen the choice of residential accommodation in the area and lead to some employment at construction stage. However, these are not matters of sufficient weight to outweigh or overcome my conclusion on the main issue. In any event, I do not doubt that it would be possible to enlarge the property in a manner which constituted good design and where material harm was not caused to the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons outlined above, and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the proposal would not deliver a sustainable form of development. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

Daniel Hartley

INSPECTOR