



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 July 2019

by Lynne Evans BA MA MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/C3620/D/19/3229770

Mole House, 18 Mole Road, Fetcham Surrey KT22 9RN

- 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 Mark Waddell against the decision of Mole Valley District Council.
 - The application Ref: MO/2019/0320/PLAH dated 18 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 24 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is alterations to the entrance porch canopy. Erection of 1st floor front elevation bedroom extension above the garage. Single storey side extension and 2 storey rear extension. Extension to driveway.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for alterations to the entrance porch canopy; erection of 1st floor front elevation bedroom extension above the garage; single storey side extension and 2 storey rear extension; extension to driveway at Mole House, 18 Mole Road, Fetcham Surrey KT22 9RN in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: MO/2019/0320/PLAH dated 18 February 2019, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: PL100; PL110; PL120; PL130; PL140.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) Notwithstanding condition 2, prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, the side facing windows at first floor level in the north-east and south-west facing elevations (to include both bathrooms and the side facing window of the bedroom above the existing garage) shall be glazed in obscure glass and only openable above 1.7m above the finished internal floor level of that room. The windows shall be permanently retained in that condition thereafter.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - a) the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing building and on the street scene, and
 - b) the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the adjoining neighbours at No 20 Mole Road, with particular regard to loss of outlook and privacy.

Reasons

Issue a) Character and Appearance

3. The appeal property is a detached residential dwelling set back from the road and on the south east side of a bend in Mole Road, within a predominantly residential area. The surrounding dwellings are primarily semi-detached, a number of which have been extended, although there are a small number of detached houses and single storey properties. Given its set back from the street frontage and in comparison with the extended semi-detached pairs on either side, the property appears quite small in the street scene. There is a public footpath running along the northern side boundary of the property, separating it from No 20 Mole Road.
4. The proposal would undertake a number of extensions to the property; at the front, a first floor extension would be built above the existing garage under a hipped roof and the screened porch area would become a covered porch under a hipped roof. There would be a two storey rear extension across the full width of the property under a hipped roof and a single storey extension beyond, which would wrap around part of the south-western side elevation, again under a hipped roof.
5. The front extension would be above the existing, flat roofed garage with a modest hipped roof above. Although it would be the depth of the garage, it would appear as a subordinate addition to the main house as a result of the lower hipped roof compared with the ridge line to the main roof of the existing house. The proposed porch would partly enclose an existing screened porch area with a brick and tile addition, in keeping with the existing house. The flat roofs over the existing garage and porch area would be removed; however, I do not consider that the existing flat roofs are a defining feature of the character or the appearance of the existing house. Moreover, there is a wide mix of pitched, hipped as well as flat roofs in the local street scene.
6. The main additional massing would be at the rear of the house, but the additional depth would not be out of proportion with the depth of the existing house. The hipped roof would be set down slightly from the main roof. The proportions of the single storey extension would be modest in depth and at the rear the extensions would step down away from the existing ridge line.
7. I agree with the Council, that, taken all together, this would be a sizeable extension to the existing house. However, given that the overall extension would comprise a number of different elements, each of which has been designed to be subservient to the main house, I do not consider that it would appear overly dominant or excessive in relation to the existing house.

8. The existing house is not typical of the street scene, both in terms of its design and set back from the street frontage. The Council has indicated that front extensions are not a common feature in the street scene, but most of the existing houses are set much further forward in their plots and have therefore been extended to the side and/or rear. Given the set back of the existing house, I consider that the proposed front extensions would not be visually intrusive in the street scene. There would be limited street scene views of the rear extensions, although some views would be gained from the footpath which runs along the side of the property. However, given their scale and design, including an element of single storey extension, I do not consider that the rear extensions would be visually intrusive or over dominant in such views.
9. I am therefore satisfied that the proposed extensions would respect the character and appearance of the existing house and street scene. There would be no conflict with Policy CS14 of the adopted Mole Valley Core Strategy (Core Strategy) and Policies ENV22 and ENV32 of the Mole Valley Local Plan (Local Plan) as well as the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework), including Section 12, all of which seek a good standard of design which respects the local context.

Issue b) Living Conditions

10. The neighbouring property at No 20 Mole Road is located to the north of the appeal property and separated by the public footpath between the two properties. The appeal property is set back so that the front of the dwelling is almost level with the rear of the neighbouring property. Although the proposed extension would add to the massing at the rear, given the modest increase in depth under a hipped roof, together with the distance between the properties, I am satisfied that the proposed rear extension would not be overbearing for the neighbours at No 20 or materially affect levels of light or increase overshadowing of their rear garden.
11. However, I do share the Council's concern regarding the side facing window in the front extension above the garage that could result in some, albeit limited, overlooking and loss of privacy for the neighbours at No 20 in their rear garden closest to the house. However, this appears to be a secondary window to the proposed bedroom with another front facing window. As a result, a requirement for the side facing window to be in obscure glass and non-openable (below 1.7m above the finished floor level of that room) would not compromise the living conditions of future occupiers of the appeal property but would overcome the identified harm to the living conditions of the neighbours at No 20.
12. I therefore find that, subject to the imposition of a condition as discussed above, there would be no material harm to the living conditions of the neighbours at No 20, with particular regard to loss of outlook, light and privacy. There would be no conflict with Policies ENV22 and ENV32 of the Local Plan and paragraph 127 of the Framework, all of which, amongst other things, seek to protect the amenities of existing and future occupiers.
13. The dwelling on the other side of the appeal property at No 16 has been extended to the side, towards the appeal property. The front facing window in the proposed room above the garage would be forward facing and would not provide a direct line of sight towards the windows in the neighbouring property at No 16. Given the relationship between the two properties, I am satisfied that the proposed front extension would not affect the living conditions of the

neighbours at No 16, with particular regard to overlooking and loss of privacy, loss of outlook and loss of light. The Council also found no harm to the living conditions of these neighbours.

14. I also agree with the Council that as a result of the orientation of the two properties at Nos 16 and 17 Friars Orchard as well as their distance to the appeal property, combined with the design of the extension, there would be no material impact on the living conditions of these neighbours, with particular regard to overlooking and loss of privacy, loss of outlook and loss of light.

Other Considerations

15. Given the siting of the property is an established residential area with street lamps, I do not consider that the proposal would result in a material increase in light pollution from the proposed exterior lights or roof lights. The Council raised no concern in this regard.

Conditions

16. I agree with the conditions suggested by the Council. Matching materials to the existing house are required to respect the character and appearance of the existing house and local area. As discussed above and proposed by the Council, a condition is required to ensure that there is no overlooking and consequent loss of privacy from the side facing windows as proposed to protect the living conditions of the surrounding neighbours. I shall also add a condition to list the approved plans for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, including in representations I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

L J Evans

INSPECTOR