The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 August 2019

by Julie Dale Clark BA (Hons) DipTP MCD DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/19/3227913
23 Harebell Hill, Cobham KT11 2RS

- 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 Mrs Claire Layton against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
- The application Ref 2018/3819, dated 21 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 1 March 2019.
- The development proposed is part single, part two storey extension to existing dwelling.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider that the main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a large detached house located close to the junction with Broad Highway on the corner of which is a grassed treed area. The area is characterised by spacious dwellings, of different designs, amongst an area comprising wide grassed verges and trees. The existing house is two-storeys high with an elongated single storey addition on its northern side. The proposal would considerably enlarge the property including re-building the single storey addition, creating a long linear extension and two floors of accommodation. Part of this would be in the roof space.

4. Core Strategy Policy CS17[1] sets out key principles to guide the form and design of new development emphasising local character, development density and sustainable design. Amongst other things it sets out the Council's requirement for high quality design which is reiterated in Local Plan Policy DM2[2] and the Council Design and Character SPD[3]. The National Planning Policy Framework also promotes good design[4]

[1] Elmbridge Core Strategy July 2011, Adopted 20 July 2011.
[2] Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan April 2015, Adopted 15 April 2015.
[3] Elmbridge Borough Council Local Plan Design and Character Supplementary Planning Document, Adopted 18 April 2012 (SPD).
[4] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government National Planning Policy Framework, July 2018 (the Framework).

5. The proposal would produce an extremely elongated dwelling that would subsume the appearance and proportion of the original house. I accept that the existing house has little architectural merit and whilst a linear extension has previously been added to the side of the house, the proposal would be considerably more imposing, disproportionate and obtrusive in the street scene.

6. I also accept that the house is in a generous plot and space around the dwelling would be retained. The area is characterised by grass verges and spacious dwellings, some set behind security gates making it difficult to judge their impact. The proposal would not affect grass verges or the area to the north, of No 23. In this respect the open character of the area would be maintained but this would be negated by the impact of the large, extended dwelling now proposed within the curtilage of No 23 Harebell Hill.

7. I have considered the effect on the occupiers of the neighbouring dwellings, in particular No 24 Broad Highway. The proposed rear elevation includes a number of windows and two large Juliet balconies. Whilst the latter may not differ in actual overlooking than most windows, the amount of glazing and the balconies could be perceived as being more intrusive. Whilst the effect on neighbours is lessened by orientation, distance and vegetation, this matter adds to my concern about the overall size and impact of the proposal.

8. I have considered all other matters raised but none alter my conclusion. I conclude that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area in conflict with the policies referred to. The appeal therefore fails.

J D Clark

INSPECTOR