
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 August 2019

by D J Barnes MBA BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 2nd October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/L3625/D/19/3232019

11 Fairlawn Drive, Redhill RH1 6JP

- 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 Tim Carr against the decision of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00283/HHOLD, dated 11 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 8 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a garage extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. During the course of the appeal a representation was made by a third party. This representation has been taken into account in the determination of this appeal.

Main Issues

3. It is considered that the main issues are the effects of the proposed development on (a) the character and appearance of the streetscene and (b) the living conditions of the occupiers of 10 Fairlawn Drive.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal property is a 2-storey detached dwelling facing towards the turning head of a cul-de-sac located within a primarily residential area. By reason of the differences in ground levels, the ground floor level of the dwellings fronting the turning head are elevated above their garages. As claimed by the appellant, there are garages around the turning head, and elsewhere along Fairlawn Drive, which project forward of their host dwellings. The front gardens of these dwellings are landscaped and used for parking.
5. The property reflects these characteristics with a single garage projecting into the front garden where there is currently parking for, as identified by the appellant, 4 vehicles. The roof of the garage is used as a terrace. The proposed development includes a front extension to the existing garage that would approximately double its length but would still retain some space for vehicles to be parked off-street.

6. Although garages around the turning head and elsewhere along the road do project forward of their host dwellings, the overall depth of the extended garage would be significantly greater than any other garage. There would be an erosion of the open front garden of the property. Further, although there are double garages, no similar examples of a tandem style garage projecting significantly forward of a dwelling were observed elsewhere within the streetscene. For these reasons, I share the Council's assessment that the scale, depth and siting of the proposed extension would result in a visually dominant and incongruous form of development which would fail to respect the character and appearance of the streetscene.
7. On this issue it is concluded that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the streetscene and, as such, there would be a conflict with Policy Ho16 of the Reigate and Banstead Local Plan (LP) and the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance: *Householder Extensions and Alterations* (SPG). Amongst other matters this policy and the SPG refer to minimising the effects of front extensions on the character of the surrounding area and garages within front gardens tending to look out of place within the streetscene. LP Policies Ho6 and Ho13 appear to be directed at new residential developments rather than householder extensions.

Living Conditions

8. Although the site visit was undertaken on an unaccompanied basis, I was able to observe the relationship between the garage's roof terrace and both the front garden and first floor bedroom window of 10 Fairlawn Drive. The substantial vegetation forming the boundary between the appeal property and No. 10 was also observed.
9. Any views towards the bedroom window of No. 10 from the existing terrace would not be materially altered by the proposed development and would be filtered or obstructed by the existing boundary vegetation. Even assuming the boundary vegetation might be removed at a later date, the existing terrace is closer to this bedroom window and the views from the proposed development would be both oblique and from a greater distance. Overlooking of the front garden of No. 10 from the extended garage would not be materially different to the current situation, with or without the boundary vegetation. The front garden is not a private amenity space because it is fully visible from the turning head. Overall, there would be no significant loss of privacy to the occupiers of No. 10 by reason of overlooking.
10. The single storey height of the proposed extension together with the elevation and orientation of No. 10 above the front garden would avoid the visual and physical impression of the appeal scheme being a dominant or an unacceptably overbearing form of development for the occupiers of this neighbouring property. The outlook from the front windows of No. 10 would remain mainly towards the turning head and, because of the difference in ground level, it also would generally be above the appeal scheme. This assessment ignores the screening effects of the existing boundary vegetation which would further reduce any perceived harm.
11. For the reasons given, it is concluded that the proposed development would not cause significant harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of 10 Fairlawn Drive and, as such, there would not be a conflict with the SPG concerning

extensions not appearing overbearing or resulting in a significant loss of privacy to adjoining properties.

Conclusion

12. Although the proposed development would not cause significant harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of 10 Fairlawn Drive, this matter is demonstrably outweighed by the unacceptable harm which would be caused to the character and appearance of the streetscene. Accordingly, it is concluded that this appeal should be dismissed.

D J Barnes

INSPECTOR