
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 January 2020

by Neil Smith BA Hons BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3820/D/19/3239258

43 Lismore Crescent, Broadfield, Crawley RH11 9DA

- 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 Miss Cecilia Tipa against the decision of Crawley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref CR/2019/0385/FUL, dated 28 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 7 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is conversion of existing garage into an habitable space.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for the conversion of existing garage into an habitable space at 43 Lismore Crescent, Broadfield, Crawley RH11 9DA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref CR/2019/0385/FUL, dated 28 May 2019, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: PL-Block A Block Plan; PL-SITE Site Location Plan; PL-100 Existing Plans & Elevations and; PL-101 B Proposed Plans & Elevations.
 - 3) The external materials of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural matter

2. The appellant has provided a revised plan which shows a different car parking arrangement to that shown on the application plans. In this regard, I am mindful of Annex M of the Procedural Guide - planning appeals England, and it would be inappropriate to accept the plans, as the information has not been subject to formal consultation and may prejudice other interested parties.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the appeal proposal on the highway safety.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a two-storey, mid-terrace dwelling. The property has a single garage projecting forward of the main elevation and has an area of

- hardstanding and a footpath leading to the front door. The neighbouring dwellings are similar in design and have similar off-street car parking arrangements.
5. The appeal proposal is for the conversion of the existing garage to form an internal reception room, which would be accessed from the main dwelling via the hallway. There would be a new window to the side elevation of the garage.
 6. There are no parking restrictions along this part of the street, and I saw several cars parked on the street, which did not impede traffic flow along the highway. There are also a few bays inset from the street in the vicinity of the appeal proposal, which would allow safe and convenient on-street parking. There are also numerous dwellings in the street that have had garages converted into living accommodation, and the prevalence of available parking does not appear to have resulted in any unacceptable on-street car parking pressure.
 7. The appeal garage is narrow and capable of accommodating a single car. However, I am aware that the size of modern cars has increased since the construction of the garage, and that getting into and out of a modern car is more challenging, due to its limited width. The appellant has provided a statutory declaration, dated 15 October 2019, stating that the garage has not been in use since 1 November 2001 and I have no evidence to the contrary. I am also mindful that it is not uncommon for garages to be used for other purposes than the parking of cars.
 8. The Council have produced an Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (October 2016). It states that the conversion of a garage into a habitable room may result in the loss of onsite parking, which in turn could create pressure for on-street parking around a dwelling. However, the combination of the off-street car parking space in the driveway; the availability of on-street car parking near the dwelling; and the fact that the garage has not been in use for parking cars; leads me to conclude that the proposal would not be harmful to highway safety in the area.
 9. Consequently, the proposal would comply with Policies CH3 and IN4 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015 and the SPD 2016, which require, amongst other things, development to meet the requirements necessary for their safe and proper use.

Conditions

10. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have imposed a condition that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans in the interests of certainty. A condition concerning external materials is required in the interests of the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusions

11. For the reasons above, the appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted.

Neil Smith

INSPECTOR