



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 January 2020

by Christopher Miell, MPlan, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/A3655/D/19/3240088

29 Lambourne Crescent, Sheerwater, Woking, Surrey, GU21 5RG

- 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 Munir against the decision of Woking Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: PLAN/2019/0652 dated 18 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 31 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'double storey side and rear extensions'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. In the interests of precision, I have used the address from the Council's decision notice in the banner heading.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are (i) the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the area; and (ii) the effect of the development upon the living conditions of the occupiers of No. 27 Lambourne Crescent in respect of outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a two-storey end terrace dwelling, which is positioned on the western side of Lambourne Crescent. The property has a single storey garage adjacent to the side boundary. The surrounding area has a suburban residential character and the properties along Lambourne Crescent are typically two-storey terraced or semi-detached dwellings with hipped and gable roof forms.
5. The appeal property is one of eight terraced dwellings on the side of the road where the appeal site is located. The terraces are broken up into two blocks of four dwellings (Nos. 21 to 27 Lambourne Crescent and Nos. 29 to 35 Lambourne Crescent) which date from the same architectural period and have a homogenous design. Consequently, the two rows of terraced properties appear well balanced when viewed from the street and contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area.

6. The proposal is for a two-storey side extension and part single/part two-storey rear extension. As part of the proposed development, the existing garage would be demolished.
7. Where the other terraced properties have been extended, the extensions are typically of a modest scale and have a subservient relationship with the host building, which includes a two-storey side extension to No. 35 that is set back from the front elevation of the host building. Consequently, the properties retain their original design balance and symmetry, which contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.
8. Despite the proposed use of sympathetic materials and a traditional roof form, the overall footprint and scale of the proposed extensions would be significant and excessive in the context of the proportions of the existing dwelling. As such, the proposed extension would fail to create a subservient relationship with the host building. Consequently, the proposal would unacceptably diminish the architectural integrity of the host building and the row of terraced properties where the appeal site is located.
9. In addition, and for the reasons above, when viewed in the context of the surrounding area, the proposal would appear as an unduly prominent form of development, causing significant harm to the character and appearance of the area.
10. Furthermore, due to the overall footprint of the proposed extensions, the proposal would significantly reduce the amount of private garden space at the appeal site. To this regard, I note that the development would not accord with the private amenity space standards set out within the Council's Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight Supplementary Planning Document (July 2008) (the 'OAPD SPD').
11. The appellant argues that the size of the remaining rear garden area would be larger than the existing rear gardens of Nos. 27 and 31 Lambourne Crescent. However, no technical details have been provided to demonstrate that this would be this. Even if I were to accept the appellant's position, I note that the neighbouring properties have not been extended to the extent which is currently proposed. As such, this is not a determinative point in this appeal.
12. The appellant has drawn my attention to two properties on Albert Drive and Beaufort Road, respectively, which have been extended to the side with large extensions. The developments are located a considerable distance away from the appeal site. Such development is not seen in the context of the appeal site and does not therefore contribute directly to the aforementioned and distinctive characteristics of the local area.
13. For the collective reasons outlined above, I conclude that the proposal would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, the proposal does not accord with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) (the 'CS') insofar as it requires new development to respect and make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area.
14. In addition, the proposal does not accord with the advice contained within the Woking Design Supplementary Planning Document (February 2015) (the 'Design SPD') which states that "*it is important to retain a minimum 1m gap between all two storey extensions and a side boundary*".

Living conditions of neighbouring occupiers

15. The proposal would introduce additional built form along the shared boundary with No. 27 Lambourne Crescent. However, the impact of the additional built form, when viewed from No. 27, would be very limited due to the staggered arrangement of the existing terraced blocks whereby the proposed two-storey extension to No. 29 would broadly align with the original rear elevation of No. 27. Consequently, I conclude that the occupiers of No. 27 would retain an acceptable outlook and that the proposal would not lead to an oppressive sense of enclosure when viewed from the neighbouring property.
16. The Council have concluded that the proposal would not result in a loss of privacy, nor would it cause a material loss of daylight and sunlight for the occupiers of No. 27. Based on my site observations, which included an assessment of the separation between the proposed extensions and No. 27, I have no reason to disagree with this assessment.
17. Given the above, I conclude that the proposed development would not cause significant harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No. 27 Lambourne Crescent in respect of outlook. As such, the proposal would accord with Policy CS21 of the CS insofar as it requires new development to achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjoining properties avoiding significant harmful impacts in terms of loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight, or an overbearing effect due to bulk, proximity or outlook.
18. To this regard, the proposal would also accord with the guidance relating to outlook contained within the OAPD SPD. In addition, I find that the proposal would not conflict with the guidance on residential extensions contained within the Design SPD, insofar as it would not have an overbearing impact on the occupiers of the adjoining dwelling.

Other Matters

19. The Council's officer report explains that the appeal proposal would have an unacceptable impact on car parking provision and highway safety. Furthermore, the Council state that the site is located within Flood Zone 2 and Zone B (400m-5km) of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. However, I note that none of these matters formed part of the Council's reasons for refusal. Nevertheless, as I have concluded that the proposed development would conflict with other development plan policies, and, given my decision to dismiss this appeal, it has not been necessary for me to consider these matters any further.

Conclusion

20. The proposed development would safeguard the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. However, this would not overcome or outweigh the significant harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Christopher Miell

INSPECTOR