



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 June 2020

by Ian Harrison BA Hons DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/L3625/W/20/3244236

58 London Road, Redhill RH1 1LN

- 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 Chris Andrews against the decision of Reigate & Banstead Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00189/F, dated 29 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 5 July 2019.
 - The development proposed was originally described as the "construction of a dormer roof extension to the rear elevation and on the side elevation of the outrigger, together with the erection of a single storey ground floor rear extension."
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description used above has been taken from the application form. However, the Council's decision notice and the appeal form refer to a part-two storey rear extension and some of the submitted drawings showed such an arrangement, albeit not all of them. Although the appellant's submissions include a revised plan and an additional plan that appear to address the inconsistency and show a part-two storey rear extension, I must determine the appeal on the basis of the scheme that was applied for and the drawings which were before the Council when it made its decision, acknowledging that those drawings in part illustrated different schemes. To do otherwise could prejudice the interests of those who may not have been aware of a two storey element of the proposal or for whom it was unclear whether or not it formed part of the scheme. The configuration of the proposed dormers is identical on all versions of the drawings.
3. On 26 September 2019 the Reigate & Banstead Local Plan Development Management Plan (The LPDMP) was adopted, with policy DES1 of the LPDMP replacing elements of policies Ho9, Ho13 and Ho16 of the Reigate and Banstead Borough Local Plan 2005 (The LP). The appellant's statement indicates an awareness of the changes to the development plan and has addressed the implications of this. As such, I have found that the proposed development can be considered in relation to The LPDMP without the need to invite further comments from either main party.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area, with particular regard to the proposed roof extensions.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is located within an area that features a variety of buildings that are used for a mix of purposes, with the built form featuring significant variety in terms of scale and appearance. However, the semi-detached building at the appeal site sits within a string of similar buildings of uniform scale that have an aligned frontage and a largely repetitive appearance to the front. The buildings feature outriggers and extensions to the rear, with the building at the appeal site and its attached neighbour featuring a shared 2 storey outrigger with a pitched roof. The building at the appeal site contains a six bedroom House in Multiple Occupation and a separate flat at basement level.
6. As part of the proposed development, the height of the outrigger would be increased with a mostly flat roofed extension that would also have a small element of pitched roof at the side. This proposed extension to the outrigger would connect to a further roof extension that is proposed on the rear facing roof of the main part of the building. That extension would be inset from the edges and eaves of the roof and be of a height that would sit below the height of the main roof.
7. The proposed roof extensions would represent large additions to the building that integrate poorly with the existing building and have a dominating effect on the roofscape. Furthermore, by virtue of their inconsistent heights and the use of pitched and flat roofs, the roof extensions would have a contrived and awkward form that would detract from the appearance of the existing building. Moreover, whilst some of the windows within the proposed roof extensions would align with those that are already present, their proportions would not reflect the existing windows of the building. In these respects, the proposal would not accord with the Council's Householder Design Guidance¹ (The SPG) which, despite pre-dating the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework), provides guidance relating to the design of dormer windows in a manner that is consistent with the aim of Paragraph 126 of The Framework.
8. The roof extensions would not be visible from London Road due to the presence of the existing and neighbouring buildings. However, they would be visible from the rear of the surrounding properties and from Lynwood Road, particularly through the wide gap between 50 London Road and 9 Lynwood Road. From where it would be visible, the discordant form and design of the extension would cause it to detract from the character and appearance of the existing building and the group of semi-detached buildings that the appeal site is a part of. The retention of the existing chimney and the use of suitable materials would not mitigate the visual effect of the proposed development. Furthermore, I do not find that the proposal represents a sensitive design approach and I have no basis to conclude that the proposal would represent innovative design as has been suggested by the appellant.

¹ Supplementary Planning Guidance - Householder Extensions and Alterations, adopted March 2004

9. Roof extensions have occurred at 23 and 27A Lynwood Road, but the Certificates of Lawfulness² that have been provided by the appellant indicate that they were constructed without the need to obtain planning permission. As such, the content of neither the LP nor the LPDMP would have been applicable and this reduces the weight that I afford to those examples. In any event, as the dormers at those properties are of minimal prominence, their effect is not comparable to the visual effect of the proposed development, particularly as a result of it being clearly visible within the public domain. Furthermore, those dormers are distant from the appeal site and have little effect on the immediate context in which the proposed development would be viewed.
10. I acknowledge that a roof extension has been constructed at 30 Lynwood Road and I observed a further dormer at 9 Lynwood Road. However, the effect of those developments does not appear to be directly comparable to the proposed development and I have insufficient details of the planning history of those extensions to be able to afford their presence weight. Moreover, the extensions at 11 Lynwood Road and 50 London Road are substantially different from the proposal that is the subject of this appeal. Accordingly, the examples of other developments that I have been made aware of do not lead me to conclude that the visual effect of the development should be found acceptable.
11. Moreover, as the evidence before me does not demonstrate that the development could occur at the site under the terms of the GPDO³, permitted development rights do not alter my assessment of the proposal.
12. For the reasons given above, the proposed roof extensions would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area. The development would, therefore, be contrary to policy DES1 of the LPDMP which requires that all new development is of high quality design that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of its surroundings by, amongst other things, having due regard to the scale, massing and roofscapes of the area. Furthermore, the proposal would not accord with paragraphs 124 and 127 of The Framework which combine to identify that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and that developments should add to the overall quality of the area and be visually attractive as a result of good architecture.

Other Matters

13. The appellant has indicated that the proposal would meet a need that was identified within the East Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2012) and that there is likely to be a continued need for accommodation of this type. It has also been suggested that the proposal would meet a need for comparatively low cost accommodation and help to address the existence of concealed households. In this context, I acknowledge that policy CS14 of the Council's Core Strategy⁴ states that a range of housing types and tenures will be sought and that paragraph 59 of The Framework identifies that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements should be met. However, as the proposal relates to one additional bedroom, the boost to the supply of shared accommodation and the benefits arising from the proposal in the abovementioned respects would be limited.

² 16/00221/CLP and 12/01801/CLP

³ The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (As Amended)

⁴ Reigate and Banstead Local Plan: Core Strategy (Adopted July 2014)

14. Furthermore, whilst the size and type of accommodation indicates that it would be available at a comparatively low cost, it has not been secured as affordable housing in planning terms and, as such, I do not consider the proposal would meet a need for affordable housing.
15. The evidence before me does not demonstrate that the existing accommodation is of unacceptable standard or that the accommodation could not be upgraded without causing the harm that has been identified above. Therefore, I do not find that this is a benefit of the proposal that should be afforded more than minimal weight.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, I have identified that the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area, thereby being contrary to policy DES1 of the LPDMP and paragraphs 124 and 127 of the Framework. Whilst I recognise that the proposal would represent a small boost to the supply of shared accommodation and enable the enhancement of the existing accommodation at the site, the benefits arising in these respects would not outweigh the harm that has been identified and the associated conflict with the development plan.
17. Therefore, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Ian Harrison

INSPECTOR