



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 July 2020

by Rachael Pipkin, BA (Hons), MPhil, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16TH July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/C3620/D/20/3246944

19 Springfield Road, Westcott, RH4 3PB

- 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 Stuart Hunt against the decision of Mole Valley District Council.
 - The application Ref: MO/2019/2023/PLAH dated 13 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 13 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is construction of new 2-storey extension to side of house including extension of roof structure and construction of single storey extension to the back of the house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Number 19 Springfield Road (No. 19) is a two-storey semi-detached house. It is located on a residential street within the village of Westcott and due to the sloping nature of the street, it is elevated and positioned prominently on a bank raised above the street level. The surrounding properties are similar pairs of semi-detached properties, all of which have a distinctive steeply pitched hipped roof incorporating front and rear dormers. Although there have been some limited alterations to some of these properties, the majority are uniform which provides a consistent and regular pattern of development to the area.
4. The two-storey side extension would extend the width of the property by a little under a third and would alter the existing hipped roof to form a gable end. The alteration to the distinctive roof shape would make No 19 appear at odds with the uniform design and pattern of surrounding development.
5. The continuation of the roof line would be similar in length to an extension at Number 23 Springfield Road which forms part of the adjacent pair of semi-detached properties, although this property retains the original roof shape. In this context the extended width of the proposed extension would not appear unduly bulky and would not be harmful. However, the extended width in

combination with the formation of a gable end would disrupt the symmetry that exists between the host property and Number 21 which together form a symmetrical pair. This would harm the character and appearance of the host property.

6. Whilst the materials would match the existing building and would enable the extension to appear integrated to the existing building, this would not overcome the harm arising from the loss of the roof shape and its effect on the symmetrical appearance of the pair of semi-detached properties. As such, the alteration at roof level, would appear incongruous with surrounding development. Due to the elevated position of the appeal property, this would be prominent within the streetscene and harmful to the character and appearance of the area.
7. My attention has been drawn to Numbers 39 and 41 Springfield Road, a pair of semi-detached properties of the same original design as the appeal property. These have been extended in a similar way to the appeal proposal. However, these properties are positioned at the far end of the row and set forward of the matching semi-detached houses characteristic of Springfield Road. They are also opposite properties of an entirely different design. Furthermore, they are also set within a more spacious plot and further away from the adjacent pair of semis. In this position, the gable ended roof alterations are not so apparent as being different to the style of development within the wider area. Moreover, both properties have been extended in the same way and retain their symmetry. As such, these do not, in my view, justify the scheme before me.
8. I conclude that the proposed development would significantly harm the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. It would therefore conflict with Policy CS14 of the Mole Valley Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2009 and Policies ENV22, ENV23 and ENV32 of the Mole Valley Local Plan 2000. These policies together require new development to retain the character and style of the existing building, respect the scale and bulk of surrounding development and enhance local character. It would also not comply with the National Planning Policy Framework for seeking well-designed places.

Other Matters

9. The appeal site lies within the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), an area designated for its landscape and scenic beauty. Due to the position of the extension within the built-up area of the village of Westcott, it would not be clearly visible within views of the AONB and I am satisfied that the proposal would not be harmful. This is therefore a neutral factor in the balance.
10. The proposed development would not harm highway safety, on street parking or the living conditions of neighbours. These are also neutral factors.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

Rachael Pipkin, INSPECTOR