



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 September 2020

by Graham Wyatt BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25th September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/M3645/W/20/3253240

479 Godstone Road, Whyteleafe, Surrey CR3 0BL

- 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 BK Limited against the decision of Tandridge District Council.
 - The application Ref TA/2019/1554, dated 21 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 5 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a double storey side and rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the area including the host property; and,
 - parking provision.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal site contains a two storey building that is constructed of brick and provides additional accommodation within its mansard style roof. The site is bound to its side and rear by a palisade fence, enclosing its external space which is largely confined to the northern and western areas of the building. The site is accessed via Godstone Road and contains an area for parking within the curtilage of the building.
4. The site lies on the roundabout that serves the junction of the (A22) Godstone Road and Succombs Hill. Although there are dwellings in the vicinity, given the topography of the land and the extensive landscaping that also exists in the area, the appeal site relates more to the surrounding commercial properties and is primarily seen against the backdrop of other buildings that exist behind (northwest) the appeal site.
5. Although there are some large commercial buildings along Godstone Road, the area nonetheless retains an element of spaciousness created by the layout of buildings in the vicinity. Given the size and location of the existing building on the site, it commands a prominent and positive position within the street scene, especially when viewed from the roundabout on the A22 and Succombs Hill and from Godstone Road, through the entrance into the site.

6. The proposal seeks to erect a two storey extension to the side and rear of the property which would incorporate a similar style mansard roof, in keeping with the original building. However, the proposal would extend the building almost to its curtilage limits on both the eastern and northern boundaries, resulting in the addition of a substantial extension on the existing building. It would add significant built development to its overall depth resulting in an excessively large building within a very small site, appearing as a cramped development, quite out of keeping with the more open and spacious form of development that exists in the area.
7. Furthermore, notwithstanding the separation distance from the Ann Summers outlet building, the proposal would result in an unusually large building within a very tight site, resulting in an incongruous and discordant development that would harm the character and appearance of the area. This harm would be clearly visible from Godstone Road and surrounding properties.
8. I acknowledge that there are a range of type and size of commercial buildings in the area, some of which are larger than the appeal building and are sited closer to the road. However, the arrangement of these buildings allows them to retain space about and between them, in contrast to the proposed development, which would result in a large proportion of the land within the site being lost to accommodate the extension and existing building.
9. Thus, the development would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would be in conflict with Policy CSP 18 of the Tandridge District Council Core Strategy 2008 (the Core Strategy) and Policy DP7 of the Tandridge District Council Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies 2014 (the Local Plan) which seek, amongst other things, that new development is of a high standard of design that must reflect and respect its character, setting and local context and integrate effectively with its surroundings.

Parking

10. The current layout at the site provides a total of nine parking spaces. The proposal seeks to provide eight parking spaces post development with the addition of five bicycle spaces, thereby resulting in the loss of one parking space. The Council refer to its adopted parking standards¹ SPD (the parking SPD) which states that for B1 (business) use one parking space per 125m² of floorspace is required.
11. Although it acknowledges that the development would comply with the requirements of the parking SPD, as a result in the loss of a parking space, coupled with the number of desks within the proposed building, the Council nonetheless maintain its objection to the development on parking grounds. The Council also argue that if the eight spaces were occupied, the entrance to the site would be partially blocked. Moreover, two spaces are to be located adjacent to the proposed roller shutter doors, which would further reduce parking provision within the site.
12. However, the Council's parking SPD is based upon overall floorspace and not potential desk space. Furthermore, the appellant has demonstrated that the entrance gates would clear the closest parking space to allow access into the site, and that the spaces near to the roller shutter doors would be managed in

¹ Tandridge District Council Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2012

the same way as access to the existing storage container. In addition, given the sustainable location of the appeal site in relation to bus stops and Whyteleafe Station, and in conjunction with the provision of additional bicycle racks within the appeal site, I am satisfied that the development would provide adequate levels of parking.

13. Therefore, adequate parking for the proposed development would be provided. It would not be in conflict with Policy CSP 12 of the Core Strategy and Policy DP5 of the Local Plan which seek, amongst other things, to ensure that developments have regard to adopted parking standards and promotes access by public transport, foot and bicycle to nearby commercial areas.

Other Matters

14. I acknowledge that, despite its spatial shortcomings, the proposed extension would support a local family business and the employment of local residents. However, while noting the benefits that would result in this respect, I do not consider that either individually or cumulatively they outweigh the harm identified above.

Conclusion

15. Although I have found that the proposal would provide adequate parking for the development, I have also found that it would result in material harm to the character and appearance of the area. Thus, for the reasons given above, and having regard to the development plan when read as a whole, the appeal is dismissed.

Graham Wyatt

INSPECTOR