



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 November 2020

by S Poole BA(Hons) DipArch MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 December 2020.

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/20/3256092

23 Telegraph Lane, Claygate, Esher KT10 0DT

- 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 Stephen Norwood against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2020/0780, dated 24 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 21 May 2020.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a first floor front extension, a roof canopy over entrance door, an increase in the size of the existing rear dormer window, the installation of front roof lights and solar panels, an increase to the parapet wall on existing flat roof by 0.15m and alterations to the fenestration.
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Procedural Matters

1. The appellant's name given on the application form differs slightly from that stated on the appeal form. I have used the spelling used on the latter in the banner heading above.
2. In the interest of clarity and brevity I have used the description of development provided on the appeal form in the banner heading above as opposed to the description provided on the planning application form.

Decision

3. The appeal is dismissed in so far as it relates to the erection of a first floor front extension and roof canopy over the entrance door. I allow the appeal in so far as it relates to an increase in the size of the existing rear dormer window, the installation of front roof lights and solar panels, an increase to the parapet wall on existing flat roof by 0.15m and alterations to the fenestration and planning permission is granted for an increase in the size of the existing rear dormer window, the installation of front roof lights and solar panels, an increase to the parapet wall on existing flat roof by 0.15m and alterations to the fenestration at 23 Telegraph Lane, Claygate, Esher KT10 0DT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2020/0780, dated 24 March 2020, and the plans submitted with it subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawings 19343/110, 111, 112, 120, 130 and 131 in so far as they relate to the works approved.

- 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of street scene and the wider area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a semi-detached 2-storey house. It is situated in a residential street and forms part of a group of semi-detached houses that would have been almost identical when originally constructed. Whilst many of these properties have had small porches added at the front and additions within the side roof slopes, to a large degree they retain their original unity and symmetry by virtue of the prominent street-facing gables. The gables are a key characteristic of the group of properties and the street scene and therefore a matter to which I attach significant weight.
6. The proposal would include a first floor front extension above the porch. This would feature a half-timbered gable and extend forward of the main gable. As a consequence of its height and forward projection this addition would be an overly dominant and incongruous element that would disrupt the symmetry of the appeal property and its attached neighbour and compromise the unity of the group of properties.
7. For this reason the first floor front extension would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the street scene and the wider area. This aspect of the proposal is therefore contrary to the design aims of Policies CS11 and CS17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy (2011) (CS); Policy DM2 of the Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan (2015) (DMP); and the Elmbridge Design and Character Supplementary Planning Document (2012) (SPD). These policies, amongst other things, seek to ensure development proposals take account of the character of the area and have particular regard to the prevailing pattern of built development.
8. The appellant has referred to a front addition at 3 Telegraph Lane. Whilst I note that this is similar to the appeal proposal, No.3 is set back from the road more than the group of houses of which the appeal property forms part and Nos 1 and 3 do not form a symmetrical pair. There is also no evidence before me that planning permission for the front addition at No.3 was granted under the current development plan. As each planning application and appeal must be considered on its individual merits having regard to its particular context and current planning policy, I attribute limited weight to the front addition at No.3.
9. The proposal also includes the enlargement of the rear dormer, the installation of solar panels and rooflights and alterations to windows in the flank elevation. I am satisfied that these works would not result in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the appeal property or the street scene and therefore these aspects of the proposal accord with the aforementioned policies.

10. As these aspects of the proposal are both physically and functionally severable from the front addition and the associated canopy over the front entrance, they can be allowed and a split decision issued.

Conditions

11. I have considered the conditions suggested by the Council having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. In addition to the standard time limit condition I consider a materials condition is required to safeguard the character and appearance of the area. Furthermore, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning, a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings is imposed.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should fail in respect of the first floor front extension and associated canopy over the front entrance, but succeed in respect of the enlargement of the rear dormer and the installation of solar panels and rooflights and alterations to windows in the flank elevation. A split decision is therefore issued.

S Poole

INSPECTOR