

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 June 2021

by Mr C J Tivey BSc (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date:

Appeal Ref: APP/L3625/D/21/3269921
15 Underhill Park Road, Reigate, RH2 9LU

- 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 William King against the decision of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/0216/HHOLD, dated 8 October 2020, was refused by notice dated 4 December 2020.
 - The development proposed is for an "Extensive refurbishment with internal alterations and extension to the existing 4 bedroom property to create a 5 bedroom property, with new detached garage. The rear extension will take advantage of the site topography by extending the roof line to match the first floor level and creating a lower ground floor area giving access to the garden area. The roof lines will maintain the existing ridge height. The flat roof to the rear extension will have a 'green roof' either sedum or similar planting. The proposals are to reflect the existing finishes where possible but consideration is being given to rendering all elevations to provide a uniform approach."
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the appeal proposal upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within a private residential estate, comprising predominantly detached houses set within spacious and mature landscaped grounds. The subject dwelling is on lower ground than the carriageway of Underhill Park Road with trees and shrubs growing on the intervening embankment.
4. Designs vary considerably within the locality, although roof pitches tend to be steep and of limited spans, and many dwellings are of an arts and crafts style, befitting of the Arcadian setting, or otherwise enjoy a good degree of articulation in their architecture .
5. The site falls within the Pilgrims Way and Beech Road Residential Area of Special Character (RASC). Policy DES3 of the Reigate and Banstead Development Management Plan (2019) (DMP) states that residential development will be granted provided that, amongst other things, buildings are individually designed and make a positive contribution to the character of the

area, promotes local distinctiveness; and that the height, depth, elevations, scale and massing of development respects the form of neighbouring buildings and the character RASC.

6. There can be no objection to the principle of extending and/or remodelling the subject dwelling, which itself is of a plain design and form. Nonetheless I consider that the proposed scheme before me is unacceptable for a number of reasons.
7. The increased width of the building would essentially double its footprint over two storeys, giving rise to an over-scaled roof and resultant massing that would be uncharacteristic of the majority of dwellings in the locality; overall I consider that the design lacks sufficient detail and is poor in quality.
8. I note the examples of developments that have been approved by the local planning authority, which includes the plot of land fronting Pilgrims Way to the south west, notwithstanding this each case must be assessed on its own merits; further it is not for me to comment on the appropriateness or otherwise of these schemes.
9. Overall I find that the proposed extensions by virtue of their scale and massing, including the depth of the flank walls, and the span, bulk and height of the roof, would result in a dominant and incongruous form of development that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the RASC. However bearing in mind that the appeal site is located within an established residential area, on balance, I consider that the proposal would conserve the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB.
10. Notwithstanding this, and the fact that the Council have not explained how the proposal conflicts with either supplementary planning guidance documents cited within the decision notice, I find the proposal conflicts with DMP policies DES1 and DES3 which together require all new development to be of a high quality design that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of its surroundings, promotes and reinforces local distinctiveness, having due regard to the scale, massing, height and roofscapes of the surrounding area, including that of the RASC.

Conclusion

11. Having regard to the above and all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal be dismissed.

C J Tivey

INSPECTOR