



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 20 July 2021

by L Douglas BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 July 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/C3620/D/21/3274810

28 Taleworth Road, Ashted KT21 2PY

- 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 Mrs Louise Hanlon against the decision of Mole Valley District Council.
 - The application Ref MO/2020/2316/PLAH, dated 14 December 2020, was refused by notice dated 24 February 2021.
 - The development proposed is "First floor extension over garage and link, two-storey rear extension. Conversion of part of garage".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site is occupied by a detached two-storey house on a triangular plot with off-street parking and garden to the front, garden to the rear, and a flat roofed single storey side projection linking the house to a single storey double garage with a pitched roof. It forms one end of a crescent of eight houses of matching design, but is orientated in a slightly different arrangement. The surrounding area is mainly characterised by a mix of detached and semi-detached houses of similar sizes, with a large school bordering the appeal site to the south.
4. The proposed extension would add a second floor to the existing side projection and garage, with a hipped roof at a lower height and pitch compared to the existing dwelling. The resulting dwelling would dominate its plot, appearing uncharacteristically prominent in the street scene. This would be due to the substantial size of the proposal and its proximity to the front boundary, but also due to the orientation of the garage compared to the house, which would create an uncomfortable relationship between the proposal and the existing dwelling.
5. The roof form of the proposal would appear odd in its surroundings, failing to respect the angles of the existing dwelling's roof and being of such significant size that it would unduly detract from the pleasant character of the crescent, which is largely defined by the simple form of detached houses of matching

style. In this context, the appeal dwelling would appear as a pair of poorly designed semi-detached houses.

6. The Council have referred to the proposal as having the appearance of a separate dwelling, but this is not objectionable in itself. As the appellant has suggested, the secondary access door on the front elevation could easily be removed, but this would not address the harm caused by the overall size of the proposal and its unsympathetic roof form, which would be out of scale with the existing dwelling and its plot. The use of external facing materials to match the existing dwelling would not address this harm to the character and appearance of the area.
7. Other houses in the surrounding area are located on smaller plots and closer to the highway than the appeal dwelling, but they do not define the character of the area to a degree that would enable the proposal to harmonise with its surroundings. The adjacent school site is a notable deviation from the residential character of the area, but its presence would not sufficiently soften the impact of the proposal, which would remain at odds with its surroundings. I accept that the faceted front elevation of the appeal dwelling is different to most within the crescent, but this layout is comfortably accommodated at the end of the crescent at present on account of the limited heights of the side projection and garage.
8. The proposal would therefore cause harm to the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Policy CS14 of the Council's Core Strategy¹, Policies ENV22 and ENV32 of the Council's Local Plan², and Policies AS-H5 and AS-En3 of the Ashted Neighbourhood Plan³. These Policies require, amongst other things, development to respect and enhance the character of the area, while being of appropriate scale and form for the site, seeking to prevent development which is of poor quality design.

Conclusion

9. The proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area in conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate my decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

L Douglas

INSPECTOR

¹ Mole Valley Core Strategy (2009)

² Mole Valley Local Plan (2000)

³ Ashted Neighbourhood Forum Neighbourhood Development Plan 2015 – 2026 (2017)