



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 August 2021

by Julie Dale Clark BA(Hons) DipTP MCD DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/21/3279167

Halfpenny Cottage, West End Lane, Esher KT10 8LF

- 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 Rachel Gee against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2021/0534, dated 15 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 14 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is addition of new roof construction to replace existing flat roof to existing attached garage incorporating attic bedroom, with associated internal alterations and replacement of existing garage doors.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider that the main issue is whether the proposal preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the West End Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is within the West End Conservation Area and therefore I have had regard to Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which requires that special attention be paid to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. This is reflected in Local Plan¹ policies DM12 and DM2 and the National Planning Policy Framework². Core Strategy³ Policy CS17 requires new development to deliver high quality design that, amongst other things, integrates with locally distinctive townscape, landscape and heritage assets. Policy CS9 relates to the Esher area and includes West End Conservation Area noting that specific attention will need to be given to areas of high heritage value. The Council's design SPD⁴ refers to West End Green as a contributor to Esher's high quality environment described in the SPD as a self-contained semi-rural village with an historic core.

¹Elmbridge Borough Council Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan, April 2015.

² Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government National Planning Policy Framework, 2021 (the Framework).

³ Elmbridge Borough Council Elmbridge Core Strategy, July 2011.

⁴ Elmbridge Borough Council Elmbridge Local Plan Design and Character Supplementary Planning Document, April 2012 (SPD).

4. Halfpenny Cottage is a single storey detached building that seems to have formerly been stables adjacent to The Chequers, a Grade II Listed building, which apparently was once a Public House but is now a residential property. It seems that past uses of the two buildings were linked but limited information has been provided about this. Visually however, they appear to have once had a connection.
5. West End Lane is a narrow road and opposite Halfpenny Cottage there is a village green comprising ponds and open amenity space. The Conservation Area comprises a mix of dwellings but little information has been provided about its heritage. Overall, however, the Conservation Area has a pleasant and attractive village character centred around the large area comprising the village green.
6. Halfpenny Cottage appears as a fairly simple single storey building but with an unsympathetic large garage to the side. The proposal would add a floor above the garage and link into the rest of the property which overall would amount to a large addition to the existing single storey building. I note that this proposal is a resubmission of an earlier one and alterations have been made to attempt to improve its appearance. However, I consider that it would be visually prominent and alter the scale and appearance of the existing dwelling to such an extent as to dominate the simple single storey structure and lose any historical context it would appear to have had.
7. I note that the appellant considers that the proposed scheme is beneficial to the area in that it removes the flat roof from the garage. She also points out that other properties have been extended in the area with highly visible new pitched roofs. I agree that the flat roofed garage has a negative effect on the appearance of the property and the area but I do not agree that this alternative proposal would be beneficial to the appearance of the house or the area generally. The designation of the area as an heritage asset adds to my concerns. I appreciate that other properties may have been extended but the examples quoted are of different properties with different designs and history to the appeal site and do little to justify allowing this proposal.
8. I have considered all other matters raised but none alter my conclusion. I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the West End Conservation Area, it would conflict with the policies and SPD referred to and therefore the appeal fails.

J D Clark

INSPECTOR