

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 January 2022

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4 February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/A3655/D/21/3286417

8 Townsend Cottages, Coldharbour Road, Woking, Surrey GU22 8SN

- 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 Ms Jennifer Guest against the decision of Woking Borough Council.
 - The application, Ref. PLAN/2021/0969, dated 24 August 2021 was refused by notice dated 20 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single storey porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed porch on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene of Coldharbour Road.

Reasons

3. The grounds of appeal explain the reasons for the construction of the porch as opposed to the approved proposal for the door and canopy facing directly facing onto Coldharbour Road. I recognise the advantages of the appeal scheme in terms of safety, security and convenience and also consider that the proposal has been carefully designed to be of a sympathetic appearance to the host building.
 4. However, whilst I have given these points due weight in making my assessment, I nonetheless share the Council's reservations. In simple terms there is insufficient space both as regards the host dwelling's front elevation and in respect of the dwelling's minimal building line to the highway footpath.
 5. As regards the former, the Council is correct to observe that the porch's side elevation would be tight up against the front window and obscure the decorative brickwork. In terms of the frontage depth, the porch would to all intents and purposes extend to the back of the pavement.
 6. The combination of these effects would draw the eye and be likely to result in the porch being perceived as a cramped and incongruous disruption to the dwelling's front elevation.
 7. This would be harmful to the otherwise pleasing appearance of the group of semi-detached pairs. I note that most of the other dwellings have a porch but
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in all these cases either there are not the constraints of inadequate space as is the case here, or there is a return flank elevation to accommodate the building entrance.

8. I also observed that there is an exception to the above houses at Fantail Cottage at the northern end of the group, which in common with No. 8 is also a building tight to the pavement. This property is restricted to a canopy over the front door rather than a porch as was initially proposed and approved for the appeal dwelling.
9. As the proposed porch would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene of Coldharbour Road, I consider that the development would conflict with Policies CS15 & CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy; the Council's Design SPD 2015, and Section 12: 'Achieving Well-Designed Places' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.
10. For the above reasons, the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR