



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 March 2022

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17TH March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C3620/D/21/3285989

Kosmos, Grangemount, Ashted, Surrey, KT22 7JT

- 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 Dr Sameena Hameed against the decision of Mole Valley District Council.
 - The application Ref MO/2021/1222/PLAH, dated 29 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 20 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as erection of detached garage and study.
-

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 locality.

Reasons

3. Grangemount is a small, quiet residential cul-de-sac served by a narrow road. On the southeast side of the road is a row of similarly designed bungalows with uniform front and rear building lines. The dwellings project close to their side boundaries and are set back from the street behind open front gardens. Similarly designed bungalows continue around the head of the cul-de-sac.
4. Conversely, the appeal dwelling sits on its own on the opposite side of the road. It occupies an irregular shaped plot which has a wide frontage and is flanked by the gardens of two dwellings that do not front onto Grangemount. Further along this side of the road are a pair of semi-detached houses, one of which has vehicular access off the top part of the cul-de-sac.
5. Together and amongst other things Mole Valley Local Plan (LP) Policy ENV22 and Mole Valley Core Strategy (CS) Policy CS14 seek to ensure that new development respects its setting and is appropriate in relation to its scale, form, appearance and external building materials. It should respect and enhance the character of the area and provide any necessary screening and landscaping appropriate to the character of the locality. At the same time, new development should make optimal use of the site. The Ashstead Neighbourhood Development Plan (NP) Policies AS-H5 & AS-En3 are consistent with this.

6. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), similarly states that new development should be sympathetic to local character, visually attractive as a result of good architecture and add to the overall quality of the area, whilst optimising the potential of the site. It encourages a proactive approach which supports sustainable forms of development, of which good design is a key aspect (Paragraphs 10, 126 & 130).
7. The Council has also referred to LP Policy ENV32, however as that policy specifically relates to residential extensions it is not directly relevant to the proposal.
8. The proposed building would be sited within a narrow sliver of land immediately adjacent to the road, which is partially hard surfaced and partially laid to lawn. A low front boundary wall separates this land from the road and behind this wall is a low hedge. To the rear of this land is a tall fence with a row of conifers behind it. On the opposite side of the road is a pavement, with 1 and 2 Grangemount beyond. These dwellings occupy a slightly elevated position behind their generous sized front gardens.
9. The proposed building would be modest in height and would both respect and be subservient to the form and appearance of the host dwelling. It would be constructed from materials that match the host dwelling and would have the appearance of an ancillary outbuilding. The proposed building would be sited forward of the host dwelling. However, just beyond the appeal site the highway curves to the southeast and the side wall of the adjacent two storey house projects close to the highway. Also, there is a generous amount of space between the appeal site and nearby dwellings. As a consequence, the siting of the proposed building forward of the host dwelling would not, in itself, look out of place on this side of the cul-de-sac.
10. However, the front wall of the proposed building, which would be just over 11 metres wide, would be located immediately behind the low boundary wall. This would require the removal of the existing boundary hedge to the front of the proposed building. Unlike other buildings within the road, there would be no room for any meaningful landscaping to soften its appearance. Also, there would be virtually no separation space between front wall of the proposed building, its proposed front windows and the road.
11. Due to the alignment of the road the front elevation of the proposed building, together with its garage door would be unduly prominent from the southwestern end of the road. It would have an enclosing and urbanising impact on the street scene. The juxtaposition between the building and the road would appear cramped and the situation would be exacerbated by the rising levels on the opposite side of the road.
12. For these reasons the proposal would have a materially harmful impact on the character and appearance of the site and its setting. This harm would outweigh the benefits for the appellant that would result from the additional storage and ancillary accommodation. It is not something that could be satisfactorily addressed through the imposition of conditions.
13. I note that an appeal was allowed for a garage in this location some years ago. However, the garage was to be set back from the highway and sufficient space was available for soft planting between the proposed garage and the boundary

wall. This factor was taken into account by the previous Inspector and it is something that I consider is equally relevant today.

14. I conclude that the proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the locality. Accordingly, it would conflict with LP Policy ENV22, CS Policy CS14, NP policies AS-H5 & AS-En3 and paragraphs 10, 126 & 130 of the Framework.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR