



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 July 2022

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16TH August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/L3625/D/22/3292285

2 Grendon Close, Horley, Surrey, RH6 8JW.

- 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 Gavin Archibald against the decision of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/02258/HHOLD, dated 20 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 25 November 2021.
 - The development proposed is an annexe to main house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. I consider the main issues to be:
3. a) whether the annexe is ancillary to the main dwelling or is tantamount to a separate planning unit;
4. b) the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, and;
5. c) if a separate dwelling has been created whether the proposed development would result in a satisfactory standard of accommodation for future occupiers.

Reasons

Whether the annexe is ancillary to the main dwelling or tantamount to a separate planning unit

6. The appeal property, 2 Grendon Close is a two-storey detached house dating from the 1970's located on a corner plot within a residential estate of properties of a similar age and design.
7. The appellant proposes the use of the former garage, extended under a previous permission to provide accommodation at first floor level, as an annexe to the main house.
8. No alterations would be made to the external appearance of the outbuilding. However, the annexe is, as I saw on site, fitted out so that it can be occupied as a self-contained independent living unit.
9. Further, the original garden has been sub-divided, by a fence, between the main house and annexe thereby forming two separate plots. There is a single

storey ancillary outbuilding in the garden of the annexe. Furthermore, from what I have seen and read, I understand that the appellant is currently living in the annexe, identified on site as 2a, and the main dwelling is occupied by a third party.

10. For the reasons set out above I conclude in respect of the first main issue that the annexe is being occupied as a separate planning unit.

Character and appearance

11. Policy DES1 of the Reigate and Banstead Development Management Plan (Adopted September 2019) (DMP), requires that all new development, amongst other things, at:
12. Criterion 1: *promotes and reinforces local distinctiveness and respects the character of the surrounding area, including positive physical characteristics of local neighbourhoods and the visual appearance of the immediate street scene;* and,
13. Criterion 3: *has due regard to the layout, density, plot sizes, building siting, scale, massing, height, and roofscapes of the surrounding area, the relationship to neighbouring buildings, and important views into and out of the site.*
14. The host property has been the subject of much alteration. In addition to a first-floor addition, the fenestration has been altered and the cladding changed. However, by reason of its three-dimensional form and location it is nevertheless clearly an established part of the original estate layout and design.
15. The new dwelling and outbuilding would, due to the size of the plot when subdivided result in a cramped form of development not reflecting the layout, density and plot sizes of the estate or the established relationship between neighbouring buildings.
16. In addition, by reason of its form, scale and design, what I have found to be a separate planning unit here, would not reflect the layout, massing, height, and roofscape of the surrounding area.
17. Accordingly, I conclude in respect of the second main issue that what is tantamount to a new dwelling would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area contrary to the aims of DMP Policy DES1.

Standard of accommodation for future occupiers

18. From the evidence, I note that the Council contends that the Nationally Described Space Standard for the dwelling as designed is 66 square metres, and the current dwelling has a floor area of some 62 square metres. These figures are not disputed by the appellant. Accordingly, the new dwelling would fall below the required standard.
19. The application drawings indicate that the unit was designed to have two double bedrooms to accommodate up to four people. Accordingly, based on limited evidence before me on this matter I am not satisfied that the new dwelling would be large enough to provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation for that level of future occupation.

20. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not meet the high quality of design required by the development plan taken as a whole.

Other Matters

21. In reaching my decision in respect of this appeal I have been sympathetic of the appellant's personal circumstances. However, these considerations do not outweigh the substantial harm that I have identified in this case.

Conclusions

22. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR