



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 August 2022

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31st August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/22/3300907

3 The Cottages, 220 Epsom Road, Guildford GU1 2RG

- 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 Mathew Christie against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/P/02028, dated 9 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 11 April 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as proposed single storey side and rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the scale and character of the host dwelling and the character of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within a mixed commercial and residential area fronting Epsom Road. The Paddock is a small residential lane comprising individually designed family houses constructed from a range of materials. The dwellings occupy varied sized plots, which are primarily separated from each other by mature hedges. Their informal layout together with the stone wall adjacent to the appeal property, the narrow width of the lane and the abundance of trees and soft planting contribute to the informal and verdant edge of settlement character and appearance of the lane.
4. The appeal site is located adjacent to the junction of Epsom Road and The Paddock. The site is screened from Epsom Road by mature planting and trees and is separated from The Paddock by a tall stone wall, with planting on both sides. The appeal dwelling comprises a modern detached one and half storey family house with a hipped crown roof. It is one of three dwellings which front towards Epsom Road, although the side boundary of the property is immediately alongside The Paddock.
5. Amongst other things, paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), states that new development should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture; maintain a strong sense of place and add to the overall quality of the area. Paragraph 134 of the Framework states

that development that is not well designed should be refused. Consistent with this policies G1 & G5 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 (LP) and policy D1 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites (2019) (LPSS), require new development to achieve high quality design. It should respond to the distinctive local landscape character and integrate into the existing landscape. LP Policy H8 deals with extensions to dwellings and states that they should not have an adverse effect on the character of the dwelling, its existing context and immediate surroundings.

6. Section 3.1 of the Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document 2018 (SPD), explains that as a general rule side extensions should not be visually dominant or exceed half the width of the house and should be set back from the front building line. It advises that there may be exceptions to this rule if the impact on the existing and neighbouring properties is limited or can be mitigated.
7. Section 3.2 of the SPD states that the primary consideration for single storey rear extensions is the impact on the rear amenity space and that of the neighbouring property. Applications will be judged on a case-by-case basis. Care should be taken to ensure the extension does not detract from the original house and the optimum length of a rear extension should reflect the scale and proportions of the host dwelling. Variations can apply to detached houses depending on the size of the plot and the orientation of the dwelling in relation to neighbouring properties.
8. The single storey side element of the proposed extension would be set back from the front building line of the host dwelling. The front section of the side extension would fill most of the gap between the side wall of the host dwelling and the existing stone boundary wall, which is in excess of two metres in height, with planting projecting above it. This part of the extension would have a crown roof which would match that of the host dwelling; the front wall of the extension would be finished with brickwork to match the host dwelling; and the front timber framed window would respect the proportions and detailing of the existing windows.
9. The rear section of the side extension and the rear element of the overall extension would project 4.3 metres beyond the rear building line of the host dwelling. They would share a flat roof with three lantern rooflights within it and their brickwork walls would match the host dwelling. Whilst the rear elevation of the rear/side extension would be largely glazed, it would be contained within the rear garden and would respect the strong horizontal lines of the host dwelling.
10. In these respects, the proposed side/rear extension would respect and blend in appropriately with the scale and character of the host dwelling. Also, as the part of the extension that sits to the side of the existing dwelling ranges from 2.1 to 3.2 metres wide, it would comply with the width guidelines set out in the SPD.
11. However, this is not the end of the matter. The existing side stone boundary wall occupies a prominent position close to the entrance to The Paddock and makes a valuable contribution to the character and appearance of the lane. The appellant has confirmed that this boundary wall would be retained and would screen the rendered flank wall of the side extension. The retention of the boundary wall would be important both due to the contribution it makes to

the street scene and because, although render is used elsewhere within The Paddock, it is not used along boundaries. Due to its combined height, length, rendered finish and siting within The Paddock, the flank wall of the proposed side extension would appear stark and suburban, should the boundary wall be removed. It would unacceptably detract from the character and appearance of the lane.

12. If the boundary wall is to be retained it is unclear how the rendering of the flank wall of the proposed extension would be achieved. The appellant has advised in their appeal statement that the gap between the boundary wall and the flank wall of the proposed side extension would be filled with render. However, the size of the gap between the flank wall of the extension and the boundary wall is not stated and the submitted drawings indicate that the rear part of the side extension kinks away from the boundary wall. They also appear to show that the flank wall of the proposed side extension would be set in from the eaves line of the proposed extension. As the boundary wall is not shown on the drawings it is unclear whether the proposed eaves would sit inside the wall, or overhang it.
13. Overall, there is a lack of clarity concerning the proposed relationship between the flank wall of the side element of the proposed extension and the boundary wall. Whilst these are small details, they have the potential to have a material impact on the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene. As such, it is not a matter that could be satisfactorily dealt with by condition. It is also not a matter that could be dealt with by requesting revised drawings, as any such drawings would need to first be formally considered by the local planning authority.
14. This uncertainty over the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area outweighs the benefits for the appellant and their family that would result from the proposed additional accommodation.
15. For these reasons I conclude that, on the basis of the drawings and information submitted, it has not been demonstrated that the proposal would respect and blend in appropriately with the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the character of the surrounding area. Accordingly, it fails to comply with LP Policies G1, G5 & H8, LPSS Policy D1, section 3 of the SPD and paragraph 130 of the Framework.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR