The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 August 2022

by Lynne Evans BA MA MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 September 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/22/3302707
76 Greenways, Esher, Surrey KT10 0QJ

- 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 E & C Goodbun & Allen against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
- The application Ref:2022/0324 dated 3 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 4 May 2022.
- The development proposed is two storey front and single storey side extension, rear dormer addition, front rooflights and raising of ridge to property.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for two storey front and single storey side extension, rear dormer addition, front rooflights and raising of ridge to property at 76 Greenways, Esher, Surrey KT10 0QJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 2022/0324 dated 3 February 2022 subject to the following conditions:

    1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.

    2) The materials used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used on the existing dwelling.

    3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1018-CU 000 B; 1018-CU 001 B; 1018-CU 002 B; 1018-CU 003 B; 1018-CU 004 B; 1018-CU 030 B; 1018-CU 031 B; 1018-CU 032 B; 1018-CU 033 B; and 1018-CU 034 B.

    4) Before first occupation of the extensions hereby permitted, the window at first floor level in the side elevation (south side) shall be fitted with obscure glass and shall be non-openable and thereafter so retained.

Preliminary Matters

2. The application plans were amended during the application process and I have referred to the plans on which the Council based its decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposals on the character and appearance of the existing house and on the local area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a detached house on the north-west side of Greenways and within a predominantly residential area, mainly comprising detached houses of different character and appearance. The varied appearance to most of the individual houses forms part of the distinctive character of the local area. The appeal property and adjacent two houses to the north are, atypically, of similar scale and design to each other, but they do not in my view form a distinctive group in the street scene.

5. The proposal would comprise a number of different elements; there would be a two storey gabled front extension, reducing to a single storey front and side extension under a hipped roof. The main roof ridge would be increased by just under 0.6m with the introduction of a rear dormer and roof lights to the front roof slope and the sides of the roof slopes to the new front extension.

6. There are a number of front projecting gables in the street and I consider that the proposed front extension would be readily assimilated into the street scene. The side extension under a pitched roof would match a similar extension on the adjacent house to the north.

7. Contrary to the findings of the Council, it is my view from my site visit that the individuality of the houses within the immediate vicinity relates not just in terms of designs and materials, but also in terms of differing ridge heights. Although, with a few exceptions, the differences in ridge heights are not substantial, this variety is part of the character and appearance of the street scene. The proposed increase in the ridge height would not in my view be significant. Although it would as a result be higher than the properties on either side, the property as extended would not become visually intrusive in the street scene and would be within the range of height differences already found within the local area. Given the limited increase in height it would also not detract from the character and appearance of the existing house.

8. The Council's Design and Character SPD Companion Guide: Home Extensions (SPD) sets out at Paragraph 1.23 that dormers should not dominate the roof and normally some of the existing roof should remain beneath the new dormer. In this case, the proposed dormer would be set in from the sides of the roof and set up from the eaves. Given its proportions in relation to the roof it would not appear overly dominant in relation to the scale of the dwelling and would not appear 'top heavy'.

9. I therefore consider that the proposed roof works would be acceptable and would not be an over dominant feature which would detract from the character and appearance of the existing dwelling. In this regard and although I acknowledge that the proposal before me includes for a raising of the main roof ridge height, I have also taken into account the lawful development certificate granted by the Council under its ref: 2021/4070 for a rear dormer window across the rear roof slope.

10. In conclusion, I consider that the proposed extensions, taken all together, would be well designed to be readily assimilated in the street scene and would respect the character and appearance of the existing property as well as the local area. There would be no conflict with Policies CS8 and CS17 of the Council's Core Strategy 2011 or Policy DM2 of the Development Management Plan 2015, the SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework 2021, all of

which seek, amongst other things, a high quality of design which respects the local context.

Conditions and Conclusion

11. In terms of conditions, materials should match those used on the existing property in order to respect the character and appearance of the existing building. A condition should be imposed to list the approved plans for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning. I have not included Plan No 1018-CU 035 B as this appears to have been submitted to demonstrate the proposed elevations under this scheme against extant permissions.

12. The officer's report comments that the proposed side roof lights would be high level but these could be conditioned to be obscure glazed to avoid any perception of overlooking into neighbouring properties. As these roof lights would be high level in the roof slopes. I do not consider that these need be in obscure glass to protect the amenities of the neighbours.

13. However, and although it would again be high level, I do consider that the window to the proposed dressing room on the side elevation at first floor level should be in obscure glass and non-openable to protect the amenities of the neighbours.

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

L J Evans

INSPECTOR