



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 September 2022

by J Davis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25th October 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C3620/D/22/3296905

Beaverbrook House, Reigate Road, Leatherhead, KT22 8QY

- 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 M Storr against the decision of Mole Valley District Council.
 - The application Ref MO/2021/2188/PLAH, dated 24 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 26 January 2022.
 - The development proposed is Demolition of attached double garage, erection of two storey side extension, single storey rear extension, re-modelled facades and new attached garage with games room above.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for Demolition of attached double garage, erection of two storey side extension, single storey rear extension, re-modelled facades and new attached garage with games room above at Beaverbrook House, Reigate Road, Leatherhead, KT22 8QY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref MO/2021/2188/PLAH, dated 24 November 2021, 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 development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing numbers 100, 101, 102, 103, 110, 111, 112 and 113.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the host dwelling.

Procedural Matter

2. I have used the Council's description of development in the banner heading as provides a full description the proposal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area; and
 - The effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjoining dwelling 'Squirrels Wood', with particular reference to outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a detached two storey dwelling that is sited within a large, well landscaped plot. It is in an area that is characterised by detached dwellings of individual designs that are similarly located in spacious, mature plots.
5. The site lies within a low density Residential Area of Special Character (RASC). Policy EN17 of the Mole Valley Local Plan (2000) (LP) advises (amongst other things) that in such areas, alterations and extensions to existing buildings will only be permitted if their locality, scale and design are in keeping with the character of the area, particularly if seen from the public highway.
6. The appeal proposal involves the demolition of an attached double garage and the erection of two storey side extension, single storey rear extension, re-modelled facades and new attached garage with games room above. However, planning permission¹ has already been granted for the two storey side extension, single storey rear extension and re-modelled facades. The Council's concerns are therefore in relation to the further extension to the side and the attached garage with games room over.
7. The proposed extensions would further add to the width of the dwelling. However, the extension would have a lower eaves and ridge height than both the existing dwelling and the consented two storey side extension. The first floor of the additional extension would be located within the roof space and would be served by dormer windows. I am therefore satisfied that it would appear subservient to and would harmonise with the remainder of the dwelling. Given the overall extent of the plot I am also satisfied that the proposal would not amount to an overdevelopment of the site.
8. The proposed extensions would reduce the gap between the flank wall of the host dwelling and the side boundary of the site, beyond which is a detached dwelling known as Squirrels Wood which is located slightly deeper into its plot. The side boundary between the two dwellings tapers such that the proposed side extension would be a minimum of 1m from the boundary at its closest point. Squirrels Wood is also sited several metres from the side boundary and I am satisfied that a suitable gap between the two dwellings would remain. Moreover, the high landscaped side boundary and the dense landscaping to the front of Squirrels Wood provides a visual screen such that the two properties are not clearly read together. The generous gap between the flank wall of the host dwelling and the eastern boundary of the site would be unaffected by the proposal.
9. The proposed attached garage with games room above would extend to the front of the dwelling by about 8 metres. However, the dwelling benefits from a generous front garden and is set back well from Reigate Road. The frontage of the site is also screened by mature trees although views through to the dwelling are obtainable. The side boundary of the site is also well landscaped which would further soften the visual appearance of the extension. Whilst the extension would project forward of the main dwelling, I am satisfied that due to its lesser scale and form, it would be subservient in appearance to the host

¹ Local Planning Authority ref. MO/2021/0492

dwelling. Moreover, due to its set back from Reigate Road I find that it would not be unduly prominent in the street scene.

10. The dwellings along this part of Reigate Road are of individual designs and are not uniformly sited within their plots. Within this varied context, given the low eaves and ridge height of the extension and its generous set back from the public highway, I am satisfied that the proposed extension would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the dwelling by virtue of its forward projection and overall design.
11. For the above reasons I am satisfied that the proposal would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. Thus, I find it accords with Policy CS14 of the Mole Valley Local Development Framework Core Strategy (October 2009) (CS); Policies ENV17, ENV22, ENV24 and ENV32 of the LP. These policies require, amongst other things, development to respect and enhance the character and appearance of the locality, whilst being of an appropriate scale, form and appearance for the site. It also complies with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) insofar as it requires high quality design.

Living conditions

12. The appeal property is already sited slightly forward of the neighbouring dwelling, Squirrels Wood. The proposed side extension would therefore project significantly forward of the front elevation of Squirrels Wood. However, the closest part of Squirrels Wood to the appeal property is an attached garage, with living accommodation above.
13. The closest part of the proposed extension to the front elevation of Squirrel Wood would have a side gable whilst the proposed garage extension with room above would have a low eaves and a pitched roof which would slope up away from the boundary. The side boundary with Squirrels Wood comprises high coniferous and laurel hedging which would effectively screen the proposed development. Overall, given the relative low height of the proposed extension, its design, and the extent of natural screening, in my view it would not dominate the outlook from Squirrels Wood. Moreover, Squirrels Wood has a large front garden and given the positioning of the extension adjacent to the garage and driveway of that property, I do not consider that it would have an overpowering effect on the frontage of the dwelling.
14. I am therefore satisfied that the proposal would not result in harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjoining dwelling with particular reference to outlook. Thus, it would comply with CS Policy CS14 which seeks to resist poor quality development and LP Policy ENV22 which seeks to ensure development does not significantly harm the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties by reason of an overshadowing or overpowering effect. It also accords with LP Policy ENV32 which seeks to ensure that house extensions are not unduly prominent from neighbouring properties.

Other Matters

15. I am satisfied that sufficient information has been provided to enable to proposal to be accurately assessed. I have no substantive evidence before me to suggest that the nearby protected trees would be adversely affected by the proposal.

16. I am also satisfied that no material overlooking of the neighbouring garden would occur from the dressing room window on the rear elevation of the extension due to its distance from the boundary, the oblique angle and natural screening along the boundary. Furthermore, I concur with the view of the Council that the proposal would not result in harmful overshadowing of the neighbouring dwelling.

Conditions

17. In addition to the standard implementation condition, the approved plans condition is imposed for certainty. A condition requiring the use of matching materials is necessary to protect the character and appearance of the dwelling and the local area.

Conclusion

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

J Davis

INSPECTOR