The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 November 2022

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date:5th December 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/22/3303099
96 Manor Road South, Esher, Surrey KT10 0QQ

- 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 & Mrs P Modarres against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
- The application Ref 2022/0067, dated 11 January 2022, was refused by notice dated 6 May 2022.
- The development proposed is a single-storey extension, side dormer windows and side canopy to existing detached garage.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I use the Council's description of development which is more concise than the application form; I note that the Appellants also use this on the appeal form.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on a) the character and appearance of the host property and the locality and b) flood risk.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a two-storey detached dwelling in traditional style with pleasant proportions and elevations. It is located on a corner plot towards the countryside edge of suburban road which has a variety of designs of mainly detached homes. These come together to present an established residential neighbourhood with inherent character and pleasing appearance. The proposal is as described above. The upper floor is a home office which would be enhanced by the planned dormers and the other works would provide bike storage, shower/wc and car port.

5. The existing garage lies largely forward of the main property and, while it has intermittent visibility as a result of intervening vegetation, it does read in the Manor Road South streetscene. It presently appears as a low-key subservient adjunct to the dwelling in an unremarkable and suitably sized, sited and designed form. Regrettably this would change markedly with the proposal. The addition of not insignificant dormers, in scale and numerically, on all four of the roof slopes would add abnormal bulk and mass to a supposedly ancillary

building in a domestic setting. The dormer arrangement across all four slopes and very close up to the main ridge line would also simply look excessive and ill at ease in its own right and alongside the house. Furthermore, whilst the plot clearly has some space for increased ground coverage for ancillary domestic functions it would be unfortunate for such development to take place almost immediately on a side boundary line, hence relying on vegetation beyond, and also so far forward of the front building line. This adds to my main concern with the scheme which hinges around the unorthodox nature and use of so many relatively over-sized dormers. In summary, taken as a whole, the appeal proposal would represent incongruous development of an unsuitable design on this characterful property in these attractive environs.

6. Policy DM2 of the Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015 and Policy CS17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011 (CS) are relevant. Taken together and amongst other matters, they seek to ensure new development embodies high quality design, respects a host building, reflects local character and is of suitable scale and location. For the reasons given above I conclude that there would be conflict with these policies. The policies have objectives that are also reflected in the Council's Design and Character SPD. In my opinion the scheme would run contrary to its main aesthetic aims albeit this publication cannot be expected to cover every eventuality.

Flood risk

7. I believe it is right for the Appellants to draw attention to the Council's own statement that the flood risk here is minor and that only proportional information needs to be submitted. The planning application included material on this point and it would have been within the realms of reasonability for the Council to assess this and, given the nature and scale of the proposed development, to deal with flood risk issues by necessary controlling planning conditions. Had I been minded to allow the appeal I would have drafted suitable condition wording. On that basis I would have concluded that there was no conflict with CS Policy CS26 or the Council's Flood Risk Supplementary Planning Document.

Other matters

8. I understand the wish to implement this proposal and I can see the benefits to this household. The delay in determination was regrettable and I can see that the Appellants were disappointed at the apparent lack of dialogue. I recognise that thought has gone into selection of materials. As I touch on above there is a varied range of building designs along the road but I do nevertheless conclude that this scheme would be jarring on the eye. I appreciate that the Appellants may well be able to construct certain outbuildings in parts of the garden via 'permitted development' (pd). However, I have no credible fall-back position set out and I do have a scheme before me which would not sit within a pd category and which I must judge it on its own planning merits.

9. I have carefully considered all the points raised by the Appellants but these matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to one of the main issues identified above.

10. The National Planning Policy Framework has been considered and the development plan policies which I cite mirror relevant objectives within that document.

Overall conclusion

11. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would not be unacceptable on flood risk grounds but would have undue adverse effects on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR