

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 December 2022

by Mr C J Tivey BSc (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/22/3309495

1 Poyle Corner Cottages, White Lane, Tongham, Surrey GU10 1BT

- 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 Paul Mills against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/P/00581, dated 30 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 22 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is for the demolition of existing concrete flat roof double garage and adjacent greenhouse, and construction of new pitched roof double carport structure incorporating accommodation in pitched roof space.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the appeal proposal upon the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside and its impact upon the setting of the pair of locally listed buildings.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises one half of a pair of striking two and a half storey, ornate red brick, semi-detached houses in a prominent location at the junction of White Lane with Poyle Road.
4. The Council's Conservation Officer stipulates that, along with no 2, 1 Poyles Corner Cottage is a locally listed building due to their historic construction date, vernacular materials, characterful decorative appearance and largely unaltered traditional form; consequently they are considered to be non-designated heritage assets to which I agree.
5. The proposal seeks planning permission to replace the existing concrete panel double garage. The replacement would comprise a rather top-heavy one and a half storey cartlodge building, with a pair of dormer windows that would create an uncomfortable visual duality. I therefore consider that the design of the subject building would render it as bulky in its appearance and would have a detrimental impact upon the setting of the locally listed buildings, as well as the surrounding countryside which is also designated as an Area of Great Landscape

Value (AGLV). This latter element has not been included within the Council's reasons for refusal however.

6. I understand the appellants' frustration at the manner at which the Council determined the planning application; although these do not affect the substance of the case before me. I note that the appellants were willing to try a re-design and it is unfortunate that there has not until recently been a pre-application advice service offered by the Council.
7. The proposal constitutes a revision to an earlier planning application that was refused and a number of changes were made, including a reduction of the footprint of the proposed building from that previously proposed: the removal of a large dormer on the western elevation and a reduction in the roof pitch. Nonetheless whilst I acknowledge that materials were retained as appropriate for a 'barn-like' outbuilding, the dormers in particular give it an unduly domestic appearance. Furthermore, by virtue of its overall scale and design in such a prominent location, the scheme would appear as an unduly dominant, unsympathetic and incongruous form of development, out of keeping with the setting of the non-designated heritage assets and the surrounding countryside.
8. I note references to new infill dwellings and large extensions that have been permitted locally, however I have been provided with no information on these, nor on new housing estates being proposed, but ultimately each case must be assessed on its own merits. I also have to acknowledge that Permitted Development rights could allow other outbuildings to be constructed within the relevant parameters, however that is not a determining factor in this appeal.
9. Therefore I consider that the proposal would give rise to demonstrable harm to the setting of non-designated heritage assets and to the character of the surrounding countryside, contrary to Policies D1, D3 and P3 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites (2019) and Policy G5 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003, which together require all new developments to achieve high quality design that responds to distinctive local character (including landscape character) of the area in which it is set, having regard to the Council's Design Code which, amongst other things, relates to scale, proportion and form of new buildings and architectural detailing, whilst stipulating that the historic environment will be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to its significance.

Conclusion

10. Having regard to the above and all other matters raised by the appellants, I conclude that the appeal be dismissed.

C J Tivey

INSPECTOR