



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 March 2023

by G Ellis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 April 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/23/3316266

Ridings Cuthbert Road, Ash Vale, Aldershot GU12 5ES

- 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 Mark Leahy against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/P/00562, dated 27 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 1 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with dormer windows to create first-floor to existing bungalow. Extension to the front and side of the ground floor.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a loft conversion with dormer windows to create first-floor to existing bungalow. Extension to the front and side of the ground floor at Ridings Cuthbert Road, Ash Vale, Aldershot GU12 5ES in accordance with the terms of the application, 22/P/00562, dated 27 March 2022, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans: Location Plan, CR/01/22 - Existing & Proposed Elevations, CR/02/22 - Existing & Proposed Ground Floor Plan, CR/03/22 - Proposed Roof Plan, CR/04/22 - Section A-A, Joist & Beam Layout, and CR/05/22 - Location and Block Plan
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Preliminary Matters

2. Guildford Borough Council adopted the Guildford Local Plan: Development Management Policies on 22 March 2023 (LPDMP). Policy G5 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 cited in the reason for refusal has now been superseded by LPDMP policy D4. Both main parties have had the opportunity to comment on any relevant implications for the appeal and I have had regard to the LPDMP in reaching my decision.
3. Although different on the Council's Decision Notice and appeal form the description of development is taken from the planning application form.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the host property and the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The detached bungalow with a hipped roof has a flat roof garage attached to the side. The neighbouring property to the west is a similar bungalow and to the other side, the property has been converted to a chalet bungalow with dormers to the front, rear and side.
6. To create a first floor a range of alterations are proposed although they are primarily retained within the existing building lines; the front extension would not extend as far as the existing front projection and the side extension would align with the rear of the building. By incorporating the garage within the side extension, the new roof form over the full width of the property would add significant bulk and scale. However, the height is limited for a two-storey form, and the roof is designed with half hips to reduce the massing. The proposed pitch roofed dormer windows are proportionate and would be inset and set down, reflecting the approach advocated in the Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2018. The dormers would also provide articulation breaking up the large roof form and are reflective of those on the neighbouring property.
7. The proposal would substantially change the appearance of the property but there is no consistency in the form or design of those in the surrounding area. The properties to either end of the short row to the south of Cuthbert Road are two-storey houses as well as the property opposite. As such, while the proposed chalet bungalow would be larger than its immediate neighbours, space would be retained around the property, and it would not appear out of keeping with the general character of the area or overly dominant in views along Cuthbert Road.
8. The Council has raised concerns in relation to the number and the position of the windows in the side elevation (west). Due to the siting of the neighbouring property, that elevation is not seen in its entirety, and the boundary fencing primarily screens the existing ground-floor windows. Therefore, the alignment between all the windows would not be overly perceivable, and I do not find that the three small upper-floor windows with space between them would appear cluttered or would be harmful to the overall appearance.
9. Thereby, I find that the proposed scale and design of the alterations would be appropriate, and the resultant form would integrate with the existing character of the area. Thus, the proposal would accord with Policy D4 of the LPDMP, Policy D1 of the Guildford Local Plan: Strategy and Sites 2019 and the SPD guidance taken as a whole, which require developments to be of high-quality design, and to respond to the local context.

Conditions

10. Conditions are imposed to ensure compliance with the statutory requirements relating to the commencement of development and the plans in order to provide certainty. I have also imposed a condition requiring the materials of the approved development to match the existing property in the interests of the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out the appeal is allowed.

G Ellis

INSPECTOR