



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 March 2023

by Lynne Evans BA MA MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 April 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/L3625/D/23/3315423

82 Downs Wood, Epsom Downs, Surrey KT18 5UL

- 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 Freddie Burgess against the decision of Reigate & Banstead Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: 22/02021/HHOLD dated 5 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 3 November 2022.
 - The development proposed is part two storey part one storey side and rear extension, façade alterations and all associated works.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - a) The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing property and on the local area;
 - b) The effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the adjoining neighbours at Nos 80 and 84 Downs Wood, with particular regard to loss of outlook and light.

Reasons

Issue a) Character and Appearance

3. The appeal property is a detached house set on a good sized plot on the west side of Downs Wood and within a predominantly residential area. The local area comprises detached houses set on similarly generous plots and dating from a similar period. However, there are a wide variety of house designs, in part reflecting a range of extensions and alterations to the individual houses. I agree with the Council that there is no objection in principle to an extension to the property, given the generous size of the plot and the variety of dwellings within the local area.
4. The proposal would be a part two storey and part single storey extension to the sides and to the rear, following the demolition of the of the existing side part of the house with integral garage. There would be two storey flank extensions on both sides of the existing property with a single storey rear extension between.

5. The two storey elevation replacing the existing side of the house with garage would be only marginally set back from the main front elevation. The elevation would uncomfortably abut the mansard roof of the existing house with awkward and unsatisfactory changes to the eaves level. This element would be cumbersome in terms of its lack of integration with the main front elevation and would be readily visible in street scene views.
6. The long and generally unalleviated flank extensions on both sides of the existing property with shallow pitched roofs over would be wholly out of scale and proportions with the existing property. I have taken into account that the 'left side elevation' would include a number of windows and a side door but these would not break up the overly long elevation on this side. The shallow roof pitches over both flank elevations would emphasise the length of the flank elevations and would not reflect the form of the existing roof to the main house with its generally much deeper roof slopes.
7. Overall, the side and rear two storey elevations would not integrate well with the existing house in terms of its design and form and the long flank extensions and shallow roofs would appear alien and visually uncoordinated with the form and style of the existing house. Although these extensions would be towards the rear of the dwelling, they would be seen in street scene views, particularly the 'left side elevation', given the generous gap with the neighbouring property at No 84. In such views the length and form of the extensions would be a jarring element in relation to the scale and design detail of the existing house.
8. I therefore conclude that the proposed extensions and alterations would not respect but would detract from the character and appearance of the existing property as well as of the local area. This would conflict with Policy DES1 of the Reigate and Banstead Development Management Plan 2019 (DM Plan) the SPG on Householder Extensions and Alterations (SPG) and the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework), and in particular Section 12, all of which amongst other matters seek a high quality of design which respects the local context. The Appellant has also referred to the Council's Local Distinctiveness Design Guide 2021. Although this has not been copied to me, I do not consider that the proposal would meet the objectives of the Guide, on the basis of the extracts provided by the Appellant.
9. The Appellant has drawn my attention to a number of different extensions which have been permitted in the vicinity. There is no issue over the principle of an extension to the appeal property and the variety in the form of the extensions and alterations permitted and undertaken is acknowledged. However, each proposal must be judged on its individual merits and this proposal would fail the high standards of design sought by both national and local planning policy and the other permissions granted do not persuade me to a different view.

Issue b) Living Conditions

10. The neighbouring property to the north at No 80 extends over two storeys under a mansard roof beyond the rear wall of the appeal property as existing. The proposal would bring the depth of the extended house broadly in line with the depth of the neighbouring property. I have noted the Council's concerns regarding the impact on light and outlook on the study at No 80 which has one window to the side facing towards the appeal property. Whilst I agree with the Council that there would be some impact on this room in terms of light and

outlook, the room already faces towards the side elevation of the appeal property and therefore has a limited outlook and restricted light. As a result, I do not consider that the impact from the proposed extension would significantly worsen levels of light and outlook to that room to justify refusing planning permission on this matter.

11. The neighbouring property on the other side, No 84 is set forward of the appeal property and the two storey rear extension as proposed would extend noticeably beyond the rear wall of this property. The Council has calculated the length of the extension beyond the rear of the dwelling at No 84, closest to the common boundary, to be some 3.5 metres. I agree with the Council that there would be no direct impact on light levels to the rear facing windows at No 84 given their position in relation to the proposed extension. There would be some loss of outlook from the proposed length and massing of the extension closest to the common boundary, particularly to the rear garden closest to the appeal property, but given the size of the plot and the orientation of the two dwellings slightly angled away from each other, I do not consider that the loss of outlook would, on its own, justify withholding planning permission.
12. I am therefore satisfied that the proposed extensions and alterations would not materially harm the living conditions of the neighbours on either side of the appeal property. There would be no conflict with Policy DES1 of the DM Plan, the SPG and the Framework and in particular paragraph 130, all of which amongst other matters seek to protect the amenities of existing and future occupiers.
13. However, the conclusion I have reached on this issue does not outweigh the harm I have concluded under my first issue.

Conclusion

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

L J Evans

INSPECTOR