



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 March 2023

by B Phillips BSc MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 April 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/A3655/D/22/3311065

St. Annes, Littlewick Road, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey GU21 4XR

- 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 Steele against the decision of Woking Borough Council.
 - The application Ref PLAN/2022/0385, dated 26 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 26 October 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as the 'erection of a part single storey / part two storey rear extension following the demolition of the existing garage.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development is taken from part E of the appeal form and the Council's Decision Notice. This is in the interest of clarity.
3. The appeal site is located within the Green Belt. The Council has not raised harm to the Green Belt as an issue, and having regard to the exception to development contained with paragraph 149 c) of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework'), and on the basis of the evidence before me, I have no reason to find differently in this regard.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. The existing dwelling comprises of a dormer bungalow, situated in a row of houses along a part of Littlewick Road. The properties in this part of Littlewick Road are mostly semi or detached two storey dwellings set back from the road, with a variety of roof forms visible, including some front, side and rear dormers evident.
6. Whilst there are existing flat roofed elements to the appeal property, namely a garage building (to be removed) and the dormers, the proposed flat roofed single storey extension would appear incongruous and out of keeping with the existing pitched main roof. It would also, when viewed from either side, sit awkwardly above the existing rear eaves line. The first-floor extension to the existing dormer would, whilst set in from both sides, result in a significant depth that overwhelms and dominates the existing roof form. The development as a whole would have a significant visual impact and its design and scale

would appear out of keeping with the proportions and design of the existing dwelling.

7. Whilst the existing flat roof garage would be removed, which would improve the appearance of the frontage of the dwelling, given its minor single storey scale, this does not mitigate for the visual impact of the rear development. I further note that, as set out above, there are visible examples of flat roofs within the vicinity, however these are subordinate to the main dwelling and not as visually prominent or impactful as the proposed extension would be when viewed from the neighbouring dwellings.
8. A single storey rear extension¹ and rear roof extension² at Brookville, Littlewick Road, is identified specifically by the appellant. The single storey element of this property is not as visually impactful as the two storey element proposed under this appeal, and I note the roof extension was granted under permitted development rights. As such it was not considered under the same planning policy and guidance, and I do not consider this example directly comparable. A further example is given at Fistril on Littlewick Road³, however, as little detail of this is provided, and as such I am unable to make any comparisons with the appeal proposal. I therefore cannot give this any weight.
9. Reference is also made to permitted development fallback position. The drawings provided show a first floor element that is significantly reduced in depth and therefore visual impact. As such, I do not consider that this would be a directly comparable development and given the reduced first floor space provided, there is no evidence that the fallback position is a greater than theoretical possibility or that if the appeal is dismissed the fallback would be pursued. As such, the fallback holds limited weight in the determination of this appeal.
10. The appellant refers to the lack of conflict with policies relating to issues such as Green Belt impact upon the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings, however, this to be expected in any development and does not weigh in favour of the proposal.
11. Accordingly, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the existing property. Given its siting, the proposed extension would not be visible from Littlewick Road but would be prominent when viewed from the neighbouring dwellings. As such, it would also adversely affect the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
12. It would therefore conflict with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), which sets out that development should create buildings that are attractive and respect the character and appearance of the area. This policy is in broad conformity with the National Planning Policy Guidance (2021). There is also conflict with the advice set out in the Woking Design Supplementary Planning Document (2015) which sets out that roof forms that are contrary to the existing roof form will generally be resisted.

¹ Application reference 2021/0251

² Application reference 2020/0859

³ Application reference 2020/0709

Conclusion

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

B Phillips

INSPECTOR