



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 November 2023

by Stewart Glassar BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 December 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/M3645/D/23/3321992

Oakhurst, Chestnut Walk, Felcourt, Surrey RH19 2LB

- 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 Mrs Dharmistha Patel against the decision of Tandridge District Council.
 - The application Ref TA/2022/1307, dated 3 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 1 March 2023.
 - The development proposed is: 1. Garage conversion to a living room and downstairs bathroom; 2. First floor extension on top of the existing garage to provide an additional bedroom and en-suite bathroom; 3. Porch extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for 1. Garage conversion to a living room and downstairs bathroom; 2. First floor extension on top of the existing garage to provide an additional bedroom and en-suite bathroom; 3. Porch extension at Oakhurst, Chestnut Walk, Felcourt, Surrey RH19 2LB in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref TA/2022/1307, dated 3 October 2022, subject to the conditions in the schedule below.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises an existing two storey detached dwelling. It is located on a private road with a number of other houses. Whilst the appeal property is similar in its design and appearance to some of its neighbours immediately to the east, more broadly there is variety in terms of the size, appearance and external finishes to the dwellings in Chestnut Walk.
4. Houses in Chestnut Walk are all generally set back from their site frontages, with many sitting in well sized plots. The front boundaries generally contain mature trees and hedges, which despite the relative narrowness of the road itself, contribute to the spacious and verdant character of the area.
5. The Council does not directly object to the porch extension or garage conversion. I have no reason to come to different conclusions. I also note that the application form and plans indicate alterations to the parking area and based on my site visit I see no reason to object to these changes either.
6. The Council's principal concern therefore relates to the first floor extension over the existing garage, which introduces a gable and has a ridge height to match that of the existing roof. The reason for refusal references Policy CSP18 of the

Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 (TDCS) and Policy DP7 of the Tandridge Local Plan: Part 2 – Detailed Policies and Policy 2014 (TLP). Collectively these policies seek to ensure that, amongst other things, developments are of a scale, form, bulk, height, spacing, density and design which respect and contribute to the character of an area.

7. Subservience can often be the most effective approach to achieving an extension that accords with development plan policies. However, in some cases a continuation of the existing heights of the building or introduction of new, prominent features might be an acceptable, alternative approach to integrating an extension and each case must be considered on its own merits.
8. The proposed gable would architecturally be a suitable feature for a building of this design. The vertical emphasis would also help to avoid the resulting dwelling appearing overly wide when viewed from the street and its height would complement the proportions and features of the existing front elevation. Indeed, to my mind, a smaller gable would be likely to appear incongruous. It would compete visually with the large chimney breast and the proportions of the front elevation and so would be likely to result in a less cohesive façade.
9. The gable would be a feature that may catch the eye, but prominence does not necessarily mean harmful. The simple detailing would be in keeping with the existing building and so would help the extension to integrate acceptably. As a result, it would not dominate the elevation either physically or visually and nor would it otherwise be harmful to the dwelling's appearance.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not be disproportionate to the host dwelling and would be acceptable in terms of its scale, design and bulk. Furthermore, the enlarged dwelling would not be out of keeping with the mix of styles and sizes of other houses in Chestnut Walk. As such, it would not cause harm to the wider character and appearance of the area. The proposal would therefore comply with Policy CSP 18 of the TDCS and Policy DP7 of the TLP which, amongst other things, seek to ensure proposals respect and contribute to the character and appearance of an area.

Other Matters

11. The Council has not raised any concerns as to the proposal having an overbearing, overshadowing or overlooking effect. Having considered the details and following my site visit I have no reason to conclude otherwise.

Conditions

12. In addition to the standard time limit, a condition is required in the interests of certainty that lists the approved plans. A condition requiring the external finishes to match those of the existing building and thereby respect the character and appearance of the dwelling and wider area is also necessary.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, having considered the development plan as a whole, along with all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed, subject to the conditions in the schedule below.

Stewart Glassar

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions:

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans:

Location Plan	- 22002-EX-000-001
Proposed Sections	- 22002-GA-250-001
Proposed Site Plan	- 22002-GA-000-003
Proposed Elevations	- 22002-GA-200-001
Proposed Landscape Plan	- 22002-GA-023-001
General Arrangement Roof Level Plan	- 22002-GA-102-001
General Arrangement First Level Proposed Plan	- 22002-GA-101-001
General Arrangement Ground Level Proposed Plan	- 22002-GA-100-001
- 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.

END