



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 December 2023

by G Ellis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21.12.2023

Appeal Ref: APP/C3620/D/23/3326027

4 Sayers Close, Fetcham, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 9PE

- 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 Wendy Strohm and Tat-Wah Liu against the decision of the Mole Valley District Council.
 - The application Ref MO/2023/0588, dated 19 April 2023, was refused by notice dated 8 June 2023.
 - The development proposed is the erection of part two storey, part single storey side/front extension. Alterations to the existing fenestration and external materials.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the development on the character of the area and the host property; and the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring property (No.6).

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. Sayers Close is a cul de sac of detached properties of the same two-storey form with a flat roof garage to the side. No.4 is located centrally within a row to the southern side of the road and has added a conservatory to the rear. Generally, however, the properties appear to be in their original form and the close has a pleasant and spacious character with the road sloping down to a pond at the end.
4. Extending to the side and projecting some distance forward the proposed two-storey extension would be a sizable and notable addition. The projection running off the existing ridge line with a gable end to the front would create a prominent design feature, yet to the rear, the roof pitch would not align with the host property. Whilst the first floor would be offset from the boundary, the extension would add considerable mass, diminishing the existing gap with the loss of space accentuated by the extension's forward projection and design detailing.
5. The spacing between the appeal property and No.2 to the other side is limited, however, these are handed properties with the garaging and spacing to the other side. In contrast, the appeal proposal would significantly disrupt the pattern of development and have a dominating visual presence.

6. The appellant has drawn my attention to other extensions to similar properties nearby. As noted by the Council, the relationship between properties in Durlleston Park Drive and the other roads are different, and the extensions are not directly comparable. In percentage terms, the increase in floor area would not be disproportionate and the principle of an extension and the materials are acceptable. I also acknowledge that it is not for design guidance to be overly prescriptive and that design preferences change over time. Nevertheless, collectively I find that the scale, form, and design of the alterations would result in an incongruous and dominant feature which would disrupt the appearance and rhythm of Sayers Close.
7. In conclusion the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and the street scene contrary to Mole Valley Local Plan (MVLN) policies ENV22 and ENV32 and Core Strategy policy CS14. Together these require that development proposals should be appropriate in terms of scale, form and appearance and should respect and not detract from the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the locality.

Relationship with Neighbour

8. The appeal property is set further back than the neighbour with over half the depth of the existing garage projecting beyond the rear elevation of No.6. Extending above the garage the proposal would significantly increase the height and massing of the flank elevation facing towards the neighbouring property. Whilst the extension would be offset from the shared boundary this is to be by a limited distance and the appeal property is on higher ground and sited to the southwest.
9. To that end, I agree with the Council that the scale and proximity of the extension would be visually imposing having an enclosing effect and increasing the overshadowing of the rear garden. The Council also advise that the development would breach the 45-degree line from the neighbour's ground floor window. It is noted that this is due to the single-storey element which would project only a limited distance above the boundary fencing, nonetheless, together with the imposing impact of the two-storey development there would be harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No.6.
10. Accordingly, the proposal would fail to accord with MVLN Policies ENV22 and ENV32, which indicate that developments should not significantly harm the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Other Matters

11. The juxtaposition and orientation of neighbouring properties is individual, and therefore whilst a 1m separation may have been permitted elsewhere it does not set a general precedent. I have assessed this proposal based on the relationship I saw on-site and the specific details of this proposal. I am also aware that this is an amended proposal following a previous refusal and there is no objection from the neighbours. However, these are neutral factors and there are no other considerations which indicate that the proposal should be determined other than in accordance with the Development Plan.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out and having regard to all other matters raised the appeal is dismissed.

G Ellis

INSPECTOR