



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 January 2024

by J Davis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 January 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/23/3330050

55 Guildford Park Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7ND

- 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 S Bulus against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 23/P/01010, dated 12 June 2023, was refused by notice dated 13 September 2023.
 - The development proposed is retention of existing single storey rear extension at ground level, alteration to existing building to reduce unauthorised extended areas, pitched roof at front side and rear dormer including external alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, the semi-detached pair and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal concerns a two storey, semi-detached dwelling. Building works have taken place at the property without planning permission, including a partially built single/two storey side and rear extension, and loft conversion with rear dormer. The current proposal proposes various alterations to the constructed extensions.
4. The appeal property forms a pair with 57 Guildford Park Road which is of the same original design as the appeal property, with a front bay window and hipped roof. The pair of dwellings are located at the end of a row of closely-sited semi-detached houses of a similar original design and appearance, resulting in this part of Guildford Park Road having a fairly uniform character and appearance. The distinctive hipped roof design of the dwellings adds to this uniformity.
5. The proposed development would retain the front section of hipped roof, beyond which a gabled projection to the side is proposed. A flat roof dormer is proposed on the rear roof slope of the enlarged roof. Existing extensions to the rear of the dwelling are also proposed to be altered and retained.

6. The Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (2018) (SPD) whilst non-statutory, provides useful design guidance for householder extensions. It advises that generally, an extension or alteration should be subordinate to and in character with the existing dwelling. The guidance recognises that the roof of a dwelling has a major impact on the character of the building, which forms an important role within the wider street scene. It further states (amongst other things) that any significant change to the height or form of a roof will not be acceptable and that the size and design of dormer windows needs to be sympathetic to the existing and neighbouring properties.
7. The appeal proposal would result in a reduction in the scale and extent of the unauthorised extensions to the dwelling. However, the proposed partial gable on the side elevation would add considerably to the bulk and mass of the original dwelling and would appear as an awkward and incongruous addition. Moreover, the proposed gable would be at odds with the simple hipped roof form of the host dwelling, resulting in a significant unbalancing of the semi-detached pair and detracting from the uniformity of the adjacent row of houses. Thus, the proposed gable would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the semi-detached pair and the surrounding area.
8. The proposed rear dormer would be less visible from public views. Whilst it would be set down from the ridge of the existing dwelling, it would have considerable width and depth, being only marginally set in from the eaves of the dwelling and from the side of the extended roof. The dormer would have a large expanse of flat roof and would appear as a highly dominant 'box' like addition to the dwelling. Consequently, the dormer would totally dominate the rear roof slope and would appear as an overly large, unsympathetic addition which would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the semi-detached pair.
9. The proposal also includes the retention of the single storey extension to the rear and alterations to the two storey extension, including a shallow pitched roof. When considered in isolation from the other proposed roof and dormer additions, I consider the proposed two storey and single storey extensions would be subservient in size and scale to the host dwelling. Due to its additional width, the roof pitch over the two storey rear extension would appear shallow compared to those on the outriggers of nearby dwellings. However, the rear elevation of the dwelling is not readily visible from any public vantage points. In my view, the proposed two storey extension would not have a materially harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the semi-detached pair, or the surrounding area.
10. The single storey extension is also of a similar depth and roof design to other extensions to the rear of dwellings along Guildford Park Road and I therefore find that its retention would not result in any material harm to local character.
11. However, my overall conclusion is that the proposed partial side gable and rear dormer would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, the semi-detached pair and surrounding area. Accordingly, it would be contrary to Policy D1 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategies and Sites 2015-2034 (2019), Policies D4 and H4 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Development Management Policies (2023), and the guidance set out in

the SPD. Collectively these policies and guidance require (amongst other things) development to be of a high quality and to reinforce local distinctiveness and to take into account the scale, character, form and proportions of the existing building. It would also conflict with the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and the National Design Guide.

Other Matters

12. I appreciate that the appeal proposal is an attempt to regularise the unauthorised works that have taken place at the site. However, this does not justify development which fails to provide a high standard of design. The appellant also suggests that some of the proposed additions would constitute permitted development although I have no evidence before me to demonstrate this to be the case. The imposition of conditions as requested by the appellant would not overcome the harm I have identified above.

Conclusion

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

J Davis

INSPECTOR