



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 March 2024

by S D Castle BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 March 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/W/23/3325326

3 North Side, The Cardinals, Tongham, Surrey GU10 1EA

- 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 Shah against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/P/01927, dated 11 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 April 2023.
 - The development proposed is erection of an attached dwelling following demolition of existing garage, part demolition and alterations to existing single storey rear extension, changes to fenestration, along with associated parking and landscaping.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have taken into account the revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') published in December 2023. While there have been changes to paragraph numbers since the previous iteration, the parts of the Framework most relevant in this case have not significantly changed. I am satisfied, therefore, that the revised version of the Framework does not raise new considerations necessitating further submissions from the parties.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located on the western side of the highway and currently comprises a two storey semi-detached dwelling and a detached single garage. 3 North Side forms a pair with no 4 and there is a pleasing degree of design balance and symmetry across the two dwellings. That symmetry is easily perceived in the dwellings' shared central gable roof projection, the centrally located chimney stack, similar rhythm of fenestration, and in their shared hipped roof form and equal width.
5. Whilst there is a variety of house types in the area, nos 3 and 4 are part of a distinct run of 3 pairs of similar semi-detached dwellings. This run of semi-detached dwellings all share the same distinct original design features, with similar spacing between the pairs of dwellings and similar plot sizes. It is notable that these semi-detached dwellings have not been significantly

extended at 2-storey level to the side, giving the grouping a spacious, balanced and harmonious appearance. The consistency of design, scale, layout and spacing within this run of semi-detached dwellings results in them appearing as a cohesive and pleasing grouping that gives a sense of place and contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.

6. The proposal seeks to construct a two storey dwelling attached to the side of no 3 to provide a two bedroom independent dwelling, following demolition of the existing detached garage. Whilst the proposed dwelling would utilise matching materials, windows, and roof forms to no 3, the lack of a notable design break between the new and original dwelling would harmfully disrupt the symmetry of the original semi-detached pair. Furthermore, the orientation of the proposed dwelling would result in a main elevation that relates poorly to the street scene, appearing confusingly out of kilter with the surrounding highway facing dwellings.
7. In terms of layout, the limited space between the proposed dwelling's main elevation and the side boundary would be visually discordant with the comfortable spacing between buildings that characterises the nearby residential street scene. Additionally, the enclosure of the new dwelling's garden by the amenity space of the existing dwelling would result in an awkward and cramped layout harmful to the surrounding spacious pattern of development.
8. The development would, therefore, cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, the proposal conflicts with Policy D1 of the Guildford Local Plan Strategy and Sites (2019), Policies H4, H5, D4, D8 of the Guildford Local Plan Development Management Policies (2023) and part 12 of the Framework. Taken together, amongst other things, these policies require development to achieve high quality design that enhances its surroundings and positively contributes towards local distinctiveness.

Planning Balance

9. The proposal would make a limited contribution to the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. Furthermore, the dwelling would be in a sustainable location with good access to services and facilities. However, given the small scale of the proposal, the benefits identified attract limited weight.
10. Weighing against these benefits would be the above identified harm to the character and appearance of the area. The Council's policies seeking high quality design are broadly consistent with the Framework insofar as the Framework also requires development to be sympathetic to the character of the surrounding area. The identified conflict with the development plan therefore attracts significant weight.
11. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations, including the Framework, indicate otherwise. The proposal would conflict with the development plan when read as a whole and there are no other considerations that outweigh this identified conflict.
12. As I am dismissing the appeal for other reasons, there is no need for me, as the competent authority, to carry out an assessment on the likely significant

effects of the proposal on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area, or to explore the necessity for undertaking an Appropriate Assessment and securing mitigation where required. Even if I had done so and found the proposal to be acceptable in this regard, such a finding would not have affected my overall conclusion on this appeal.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

S D Castle

INSPECTOR