



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 April 2024

by Lynne Evans BA MA MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15th April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/L3625/D/24/3339124

1 Stuart Crescent, Reigate, RH2 8EB

- 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 Paul Stone against the decision of Reigate & Banstead Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: 23/02349/HHOLD dated 14 November 2023, was refused by notice dated 23 January 2024.
 - The development proposed is single storey front extension with a mono pitch roof and double storey side extension with a hipped roof and a new fence and masonry wall to the western boundary.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Amended plans were submitted during the application process and my decision is based on the plans as determined by the Council.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing property and of the local area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling facing north at the junction of Stuart Crescent with Alexander Road. Reflecting the position of the appeal dwelling at the road junction, the appeal site is considerably wider towards the rear of the site and narrows towards the front of the site. The surrounding area is predominantly residential with a mix of semi-detached dwellings as well as short terraces and some of the properties are houses and others are maisonettes. The appeal property and its semi-detached neighbour are particularly prominent in the street scene, given their siting facing towards the junction of the two roads.
5. The proposal would seek to extend the property over two storeys to the side with a projecting front porch. For the two storey element, there would be a very marginal set back from the front elevation and similarly a very small set down from the roof ridge line. The side boundary would be increased in height with a 1.8m brick wall to the rear of the house and a 1.8m fence behind the existing wall to the side of the house with a new timber gate between.

6. The two storey side extension and the porch would, at their closest points, extend almost to the side boundary. Although the gap would increase further to the rear reflecting the shape of the site, I consider that the proposed extension would appear overly wide in relation to the size of the site and would appear cramped within its plot. Although the plans have incorporated an element of a set back of the front elevation and set down at roof level, this would be very minimal, and the extension would appear overly large and dominant in relation to the scale and proportions of the existing property.
7. The adjoining dwelling has already been extended and I recognise that as existing there is a lack of symmetry between the pair of houses. However, the extension as proposed, given its form and proportions and proximity to the side boundary as well as in relation to the adjacent property would appear very dominant in the street scene. The proximity of the proposal to the side boundary would reduce the sense of openness in the street scene and including along Stuart Crescent.
8. There would be no concern with the proposed boundary treatment on its own as the taller elements would not project forward of the extended dwelling, and taller boundary treatments along the side of rear boundaries are to be found in the local vicinity. However, when combined with the scale of the proposed extension and in particular its proximity to the side boundary, this would add to the over dominance of the overall proposal.
9. I therefore conclude that the proposed extension would harm the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and of the local area. This would conflict with Policy DES1 of the Council's Development Management Plan 2019 and the Council's adopted Householder Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Guidance 2004 and the National Planning Policy Framework and in particular Section 12, all of which amongst other matters, seek a high quality of design which respects the local context.
10. The Appellants have drawn my attention to other development undertaken in the local area. Each proposal must be judged on its individual merits but in so far as the information has been provided to me, I have taken them into account. However, none of these persuade me to a different conclusion, given the harm I have concluded in the particular circumstances of this case.

Other Considerations

11. I have taken into account the objectives by the Appellants to ensure a thermally efficient home, including the retention of the existing solar panels. However, there is no compelling evidence to suggest that these laudable objectives could not be achieved with an alternative design solution, which would overcome the harm I have concluded.

Conclusion

12. The proposal would not accord with the development plan and there are no other material considerations to override this finding. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

L J Evans

INSPECTOR