



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 May 2024

by Lynne Evans BA MA MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16.04.2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3825/D/24/3339482

11 Guildford Road, Horsham RH12 1LU

- 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 William Ward against the decision of Horsham District Council.
 - The application Ref: DC/23/1861 dated 6 October 2023, was refused by notice dated 17 January 2024.
 - The development proposed is erection of a carport to the frontage of the house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached property on the south side of Guildford Road (A281) which is one of the main routes into the town centre of Horsham, from the west. The property is set back from the road behind a frontage hedge and most of the generous area in front of the house is laid out as hardstanding. Along Guildford Road and west of Blackbridge Lane, the detached houses on either side of the road, and particularly along the northern side, are generally set back from the road frontage. There are a variety of frontage treatments including some fences and low walls, but many have dense and tall hedges presenting a verdant character and appearance to the street scene.
4. The proposal would introduce a three bay car port at the front of the dwelling close to the boundary hedge. There would be adequate space to accommodate the car port within the site and it would not appear cramped in relation to the siting of the house and remaining area of front garden.
5. With the frontage hedging in place, there would be limited, if any, views of the car port from the street and the verdant character and appearance of the local area would be retained. The Appellant has stated that the hedging is likely to remain in perpetuity and I have no reason to question this intention. However, there is very limited information before me regarding the detailed relationship between the car port with the frontage hedge and how the hedge would be protected during construction and thereafter.

6. Without further and more detailed information I am not persuaded that it would be possible to construct the car port as shown with the hedge remaining in place or without causing damage at the time of construction or affecting its future health. Whilst some of these concerns might be possible to overcome through the imposition of conditions requiring further information and protection methods, I am not confident, on the very limited information in front of me, that there is an appropriate relationship between the siting of the car port and the frontage hedge to ensure its protection and retention. Without the existing hedge or alternative form of appropriate boundary treatment, the car port would be highly visible in the street scene. The car port would appear as an over dominant structure and its forward siting would appear out of character with the predominant pattern of development in the local area.
7. On the basis of the limited information available, I am not therefore satisfied that the proposed development would not harm the street scene and the character and appearance of the local area. This would conflict with Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework and Policies HB3 and HB4 of the Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Plan 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.
8. The Council's decision notice also refers to Policy 25 of the Horsham District Planning Framework, but that policy has not been provided and it is also not referenced in either the Council Officer's report or the Appellant's statement. I have therefore not referred to it my decision.
9. The Appellant has drawn my attention to a very small number of garages and car ports which have been permitted and built in the local area, including to the houses on the north side of the road. Each proposal must be considered on its individual merits. However, in so far as the information has been made available, I have taken them into account, but they do not persuade me to a different view given the harm I have concluded in the particular circumstances of this case.

Conclusion

10. 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