



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 April 2024

by Michael Evans BA MA MPhil DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 May 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/24/3338870
24 Youngs Drive, Ash GU12 6RE

- 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 C Parry against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 23/P/01791, dated 24 October 2023, was refused by notice dated 9 February 2024.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of existing garage, erection of new garage, study and low level first floor extension with alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, locality and streetscene.

Reasons

3. The appeal concerns a two storey detached dwelling. There is a single storey garage attached to the side that would be removed. In this position a two storey side extension would be constructed. It would be set back from the front of the host dwelling with the roof sloping down towards the street. Its ridge would be at a lower height than that of the host dwelling but appreciably higher than its eaves. It would also be built in an unusually wide gap in the street, given the fairly generous distance between the main flank wall of the dwelling and the side boundary.
4. However, despite these matters its width across the front elevation would be disproportionate, just exceeding that of the existing house at two storey height. In the Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document, 2018, it is indicated that side extensions should not be visually dominant and not exceed more than half of the width of the original house. The addition would therefore be significantly at odds with this guidance and given the degree of conflict I am not persuaded that an exception to this would be appropriate.
5. The dwelling is one of three immediately adjoining two storey link detached dwellings of a particularly similar design and appearance. It is these properties that provide the immediate context within which the development would be

most readily seen from the street and therefore against which the visual impact of the proposal should be assessed.

6. Within this fairly uniform group the excessive width of the addition in relation to that of the host dwelling and adjacent similar properties would result in it appearing intrusive in the street. The extension would unduly detract from the fairly cohesive appearance of the property and group. The front dormer would tend to highlight and draw further attention to the discordant presence of the development given that such features are not found within this group at the front. Moreover, despite the set back of the extension from the road, the enlarged dwelling would be a prominent feature in the streetscene. These adverse effects would occur despite the variation in house design and form found in the wider area.
7. I have carefully considered the photographs of other dwellings in the locality submitted with the appeal but most of these do not concern the immediate context. Moreover, my attention has not been drawn to the Council having approved any comparable two storey side extensions with their width exceeding that of the host dwelling. As a result, there is no evidence of the Council having been inconsistent in its decision making. In any event, even where there are side projections these are largely single storey with their width generally not exceeding that of the host dwelling.
8. In the above circumstances, rather than comprising an appropriate infill development, the addition would be an overly dominant and incongruous feature. In consequence and despite the space available to the side to accommodate an extension, it is concluded that the development would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling, locality and the streetscene.
9. In consequence, the proposal would conflict with Policy D1 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites, 2019 and Policies D4 and H4 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Development Management Policies, 2023. Taken together and as well as other things, these policies intend that development should achieve a high quality design that responds to distinctive local character and the surrounding context, while taking into account the form, scale and proportions of the existing building.
10. In the National Planning Policy Framework, it is indicated that decisions should ensure that developments satisfy a number of considerations. These include that the proposed development should add to the overall quality of the area, as well as being visually attractive and sympathetic to local character, which would not be achieved in this case.
11. Representations in support of the application were made by local residents. It is noted that the Appellant has expressed dissatisfaction with the Council's handling of the application. Nevertheless, these matters do not, in themselves, confer acceptability on the proposal and I must consider this appeal on its own merits. The absence of any detrimental impact in relation to the living conditions of the occupiers of nearby dwellings is a neutral factor that weighs neither for nor against the appeal.
12. There would be some economic benefits from the construction of the extension. There would also be social benefits in terms of matters such as the improved accommodation and meeting the needs of the occupiers. However, these considerations do not justify accepting such a detrimental development and

would be achieved at the unacceptable expense of the quality of the built environment.

13. Taking account of all other matters raised and given the harm that would result, it is therefore determined that the appeal fails.

M Evans

INSPECTOR