



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 July 2024

by J Dowling BA (Hons), M.Phil, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P3610/D/24/3341762

52 The Parade, Epsom, Surrey KT18 5DU

- 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 Kevin Bowen against the decision of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 24/00057/FLH, dated 16 January 2024, was refused by notice dated 6 March 2024.
 - The development proposed is a roof extension incorporating a side dormer and first floor rear extension.
-

Decision

1. This appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of a locally listed building and the wider area, having particular regard to the setting of the Church Street Conservation Area; and
 - the effect of the living conditions of 50 the Parade and 2 Worple Road.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The Church Street Conservation Area covers the historic core of old Epsom. The Conservation Area is split into three distinct character areas, No. 52 is located within Area 3 which is a predominantly residential area characterised by small scale 18th and 19th Century residential houses with small gardens.
4. No. 52 The Parade is a locally listed detached house built from brown London stock bricks with very prominent white pointing. The sash windows have red brick dressings. It has decorative barge boards to the gable which faces The Parade and a timber porch that looks to be from a later date. It appears to potentially have formed part of a larger property or terrace of houses, the second half of which would have faced Worple Road. The property has an existing brick and slate part single, part two storey side/ rear extension.
5. I observed on site that the side elevation that fronts onto the Parade provides the main elevation for the property. This elevation is formed of a gable end which has a symmetrical appearance with a central doorway with sash windows either side. First-floor windows have louvered shutters above which there is a

central arched window. I also noted that when viewed from Worple Road the site appears very constrained by the surrounding built form in particular the large double garage of No 2 Worple Road which is built up to the boundary with No 52.

6. The proposed extension has been designed to appear subordinate to the main house and would retain a first-floor gap between No 52 and the adjoining property. Furthermore, materials and detailing would reflect and respect those found on the existing property. I agree with the appellant that, particularly in relation to heritage assets, it may not be appropriate to rigidly apply standardised design policies. However, due to its form, height, bulk and mass and the constrained and irregular nature of the site I agree with the Council and consider that when viewed from The Parade, despite its set back, the first floor element would have the appearance of a second house and would therefore detract from the character and appearance of the existing house and the wider Church Street Conservation Area.
7. On walking along The Parade, I observed that there are gaps of varying sizes between the buildings. These provide glimpsed views of trees and other greenery which positively contribute to the character and appearance of this part of the Church Street Conservation Area. Whilst I acknowledge that a gap between No 52 and 50 would be retained, it would be reduced and although it would still be wider than other gaps, given the pre-existing cramped visual appearance I agree with the Council and consider that reducing this gap would erode the character and appearance of the Church Street Conservation Area. Furthermore, I consider that due to the large gap between No 2 Worple Road and No 52 the proposed rearward element of the extension would be visually prominent from Worple Road and would result in a cluttered and overdeveloped appearance detrimental to both the Church Street Conservation Area and the street scene in general.
8. I noted on my site visit that dormer windows were present on a number of buildings in the Parade, including on No 50. The proposed dormer would have a curved roof and whilst this would help to reduce bulk it would result in a design that would be unsympathetic and out of character to the age and design of the existing building. Furthermore, it would be visually prominent in views of the building from The Parade.
9. As a result, I consider that the proposed extensions would harm the character and appearance of the locally listed building, the Church Street Conservation Area and the wider area. Whilst I agree with the Council that this harm would be less than substantial any public benefits that the proposal would deliver would be very limited and would not outweigh this harm.
10. The proposal would therefore be contrary to section 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, policies CS1 and CS5 of the Epsom and Ewell Core Strategy (2007) (EECS), policies DM8, DM9 and DM10 of the Epsom and Ewell Development Management Policies Document (2015) (EEDMPD) and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF) which seek to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of designated and non-designated heritage assets, the wider townscape and the host property.

Living conditions of 50 The Parade and 2 Worple Road

11. I note the Council's concerns regarding potential overlooking of No 50 from the proposed dormer. However, I observed on site that No 52 has two existing first floor windows in the same elevation and therefore consider that a degree of overlooking pre-exists between the properties. I consider that the insertion of a further window in the roof would therefore not affect the living conditions of the occupiers of No 50.
12. As referred to earlier the appeal site is tightly constrained, the proposed first floor extension would extend the existing first floor addition up to the boundary with No 2 Worple Road. However, the two properties are separated by a single storey double garage and therefore I consider that the proposal would not be overbearing or result in a loss of light or outlook to No 2.
13. I observed on site that the side elevation of No 50 extends well beyond the rear boundary of No 52 and as a result views of the side/ rear elevation of the proposed first floor extension from No 50 would be very limited. A gap would be retained between the buildings and given the orientation I am satisfied that any loss of light to No 50 would be relatively limited. Finally, I note that the windows in the side elevation of No 50 are very narrow indicating that they are potentially either secondary windows or windows to non-habitable spaces such as a bathroom, hallway or stairwell. As a result, I consider that the proposal would not result in a loss of outlook to the occupants of No 50.
14. I am therefore satisfied that the proposal would not adversely affect the living conditions for residents of No 50 The Parade and No 2 Worple Road. As a result, the proposal would comply with policy DM10(ix) of the EEDMPD which seeks to have regard to the amenities of neighbours including privacy and outlook.
15. The Council also referred to section 15 of the NPPF in their reasoning. However, section 15 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the natural environment and I therefore do not consider that it is relevant to the determination of this appeal.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above and having considered all other matters raised, this appeal should be dismissed.

Jo Dowling

INSPECTOR