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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 August 2024

**by G Ellis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 12 September 2024**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/A3655/D/24/3346245**

**14 Briarwood Road, Woking GU21 8XD**

- 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 Rene Prochazka against the decision of Woking Borough Council.
  - The application Ref PLAN/2024/0071.
  - The development proposed is the erection of a two-storey front and side extension.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the development on; - the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area; and the living conditions of the occupiers of No.15 Briarwood Road.

### Reasons

3. Briarwood Road is a residential cul de sac of primarily semi-detached properties. There is a general cohesion to the style and appearance of the 1960s properties, although many have been extended and there is some variety in the materials to the front façade.
4. No.14 forms part of a row of properties setback to the western side of the turning head. Neighbouring properties Nos.15 and 16 each have an extension to the side. With limited separation between the individual buildings, the row effectively appears as a continuous terrace. To the other side, the semi-detached pair of Nos. 12 & 13 is sited significantly further forward. No.13 has a flat roof two-storey extension to the side and whilst it is a notable extension, a gap remains between it and the appeal property enabling views through to the trees beyond.
5. Replacing the existing garage sited alongside the extension to No.13 and extending partially along the side of the house, the proposal would create an extensive two-storey forward projection. It would also extend across part of the existing front elevation and would be a substantial addition to the host property which has already been extended to the side and rear. While the extension would be set down, the complex hipped roof with the ridge line offset from the main roof and a front gable projection would create an incongruous and conspicuous addition.

6. The Council's Woking Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2015) seeks that extensions are designed to respect the existing property and advises that significant extensions to the street facade will usually be resisted where there is a well-established building line. The building line varies along the full length of Briarwood Road, nevertheless, the extension would significantly protrude beyond the front alignment of No.14 and those within that row.
7. Due to the positioning of No.13, the extension would be screened in views from the south, however, it would create a linkage between the two sets of properties, visually forming an extensive length of continuous built form. This would disrupt the established layout and pattern of development, resulting in a loss of separation, and fundamentally alter the appearance of the host property and unbalance the semi-detached pair.
8. Other properties within the locality have been extended and that includes some which infill the gap to the side. The Council advise that these were erected some time ago, and prior to the current Development Plan. Nonetheless, I acknowledge that they are an established part of the immediate context, although none are of the scale or form of the appeal proposal. The appellant has also drawn my attention to various examples of front projections in the surrounding streets. These have considerably less depth than the appeal proposal, which would project 6.9 metres from the front elevation (as denoted on the block plan), they also do not have the same relationship with the neighbouring property. As such, I do not find them directly comparable, and each proposal must be considered on its own merits.
9. I understand the appellant's desire to extend their home for their family and to seek to utilise the space to the front of the property, however, I cannot agree that the extension would be better than the existing flat roof garage. The garage is an original and subservient feature, and whilst not necessarily in a forward position, they are exhibited to most properties along Briarwood Road.
10. Overall, I find that the scale and design of the proposed development would result in a disproportionate and unsympathetic addition to the host property, appearing as a dominant and separate adjunct. It would be visually intrusive in the street scene and out of keeping with the existing pattern of development. As a result, it would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area contrary to policies CS21 of Woking Core Strategy (2012) (CS), the Woking Design SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Collectively, and amongst other things, they promote well-designed developments, which respect and make a positive contribution to the street scene, and the character of the area.

### **Impact on No.15**

11. The lengthy side elevation of the extension would be at a right angle to the front of No.15. The windows would not directly face each other, but there would be an angle of view from the proposed ground floor study and the windows to 'bedroom one' towards the neighbour's front windows. Whilst, as suggested by the appellant, the outlook could be restricted by the use of obscure glazing, the relationship with the other half of the semi-detached pair would be fundamentally changed. The layout would be at odds with the prevailing form, which adds to the design concerns noted above. Moreover, due to the increased proximity and the change in orientation, the presence of the

facade with four windows and a front door with associated activity would create a perceived loss of privacy.

12. The proposal would therefore result in a poor relationship with No.15, and would compromise the occupiers' living conditions. This would be a symptom of the disproportionate scale and design of the appeal proposal and would result in a harmful loss of privacy for the neighbour. The proposal would thereby conflict with CS Policy CS21, the 'Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight' SPD (2022) and the Framework with regards to achieving satisfactory relationships to adjoining properties and avoiding harmful impacts in terms of loss of privacy.

### **Conclusion**

13. For the reasons set out, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

*G Ellis*

INSPECTOR