



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 February 2025

by J Heppell BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P3610/D/24/3348495

494 Chessington Road, West Ewell, Surrey, KT19 9HF

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Mehta against the decision of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00227/FLH.
 - The development proposed is described as a garage conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a conversion of garage to living accommodation at 494 Chessington Road, West Ewell, Surrey, KT19 9HF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24/00227/FLH, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted location plan, block plan and drawing no CO/B/01.
 - 3) The external materials of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing dwelling.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant's description of development does not indicate the intended use of the garage. I have therefore used the following description, 'conversion of garage to living accommodation' in the determination of this appeal, which more accurately describes what is proposed.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the provision of off-street car parking.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is situated on Chessington Road, a main road linking Chessington and Ewell. The area is primarily residential in character, consisting of a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties. The site is located close to the traffic light junction with Ruxley Lane, where there is a small cluster of shops and a petrol filling station.
5. The appeal property forms one half of a pair of semi-detached dwellings, which share a vehicular access off Chessington Road with a second pair of semi-

detached properties and a fifth detached house located to the rear. The four houses are set back from the road with hardstanding in front. Each semi-detached house has an integral single garage, together with a shared parking space per pair of dwellings. The appellant proposes to convert their garage into living accommodation.

6. Car parking standards are set out in the Parking Standards for Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The Officer Report cites a requirement for 2 parking spaces, which relates to Epsom town centre. My reading of the SPD is that the minimum parking requirement for a new 4 bedroom house outside Epsom town centre is 3 spaces.
7. The housing development of which no 494 forms a part was approved in 2006, under reference 05/01089/FUL, on the basis that, averaged out between the semi-detached dwellings, there would be 1.5 spaces each. It appears that as this scheme predates the adoption in 2015 of both the SPD and Policy DM37 of the Development Management Policies Document (DMPD), it was not required to provide a minimum of 3 parking spaces per dwelling.
8. The appellant has explained that the area in front of the four houses is used for shared car parking arranged in tandem fashion, and has provided labelled photographs showing that 2 of the parked cars belong to each house. Cars are able to turn centrally on the shared hardstanding and leave in a forward gear. This depiction of the parking arrangements has not been challenged by the neighbours, and my site visit confirmed that this is how the occupants of the houses park their cars. One result of this parking arrangement is that the garages cannot easily be accessed by cars, which diminishes their practical value.
9. On the basis of what I have read and seen, the proposed development would not reduce the amount of parking provided to each pair of semi-detached houses, because residents use the hardstanding in front of their dwellings as a parking space instead of their garage. Given that the ability to park 2 cars in front of each dwelling is in the mutual interest of neighbours, and is dependent on their cooperation, I see no good reason why this arrangement would not continue. As a result, given the specific circumstances of the appeal site, a legal agreement with the attached neighbour securing this parking arrangement into the future would not be necessary.
10. Accordingly, I therefore conclude that the appeal proposal would not adversely affect the amount of useable off-street parking and so would not displace parking onto the road that could have implications for the surrounding road network. The proposed development therefore would comply with Policy DM10 of the DMPD which requires the incorporation of the principles of good design into the scheme. Given that the housing development predates the adoption of the DMPD and the SPD, I attach little weight to the conflict with the parking standards that they contain. As a result, I find that the proposal would comply with the development plan considered as a whole and that there are no material considerations that outweigh this finding.

Conditions

11. In the interests of certainty, I have attached a condition listing the approved plans. I have attached a condition requiring the use of matching materials, to ensure they are in keeping with the existing property.

12. The local planning authority has requested a condition requiring that the development shall not be occupied until the car parking spaces and turning have been provided in accordance with the approved plans. As it is in the self-interest of the occupiers of the two houses to retain the parking spaces that they use (as explained in the reasoning), and the attached neighbour must have the right in civil law to cross the appeal site to access the highway, it is not necessary to ensure that the current parking arrangements continue into the future.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above the appeal should be allowed.

J Heppell

INSPECTOR