



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 April 2025

by **S Rawle BA (Hons) Dip TP Solicitor**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C3620/D/24/3350943

Ashlar, Maddox Lane, Bookham KT23 3BT

- 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 Iain White against the decision of Mole Valley District Council.
 - The application Ref is MO/2024/0592.
 - The development proposed is to replace existing timber shed at the front of the property with a timber frame, timber clad single garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted to replace existing timber shed at the front of the property with a timber frame, timber clad single garage at Ashlar, Maddox Lane, Bookham KT23 3BT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref MO/2024/0592, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Proposed Layout and Elevations - White Rev A dated 13 February 2020; Block Plan at 1:500 scale; and Block Plan at 1:200 scale.
 - 3) The external surfaces of the building shall be constructed of the materials specified on plan White Rev A dated 13 February 2020.

Preliminary Matters

2. Some of the submitted plans do not have drawing numbers and are not dated. In addition to the plan showing the proposed layout and elevations which is referenced as White Rev A and dated 13 February 2020, I have determined the appeal on the basis of the two block plans at scale 1:500 and 1:200 which show the outline of the existing shed and the outline of the proposed garage which are included as appendices G and F respectively of the appellant's appeal statement.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located along an attractive leafy lane comprising predominantly detached residential dwellings on large plots set back from the road, many with front gardens, mature vegetation and trees and parking areas. This creates a

sense of verdant openness which makes a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the area.

5. Although the properties on either side of the appeal site do not have any significant structures within their front gardens, I observed that a number of properties do have buildings in their front gardens. The Council accept that there are a small number of exceptions where there are buildings to the front of the main property on plots but highlight these are much closer to the relevant property than what has been proposed here, therefore do not dominate their front garden areas and consequently can be distinguished from the proposed development.
6. However, I am not sure I agree. There are several examples where the garage structures are located away from but in front of the front elevation of the main house on a plot. Some are of a relatively large scale. However, these other examples do not diminish the sense of verdant openness. Rather, they blend into the existing street scene and do not detract from the character and appearance of the area.
7. The appeal property is a typical example of the properties in the area as it is detached and set back from the lane within established gardens including a front hedge, other mature vegetation in the front garden as well as a parking area. There is also a modest shed to the front which is low key and consequently blends into this location and does not have a significant presence in the street scene.
8. The proposal would involve the removal of the existing shed and its replacement with an oak framed timber clad garage with a pitched clay tiled roof. Although set forward of the main dwelling and materially larger than the shed it would replace, due to its modest height, scale and mass it would appear subservient to the host building.
9. Moreover, much of the front garden and parking area would be retained and consequently the proposal would not appear unacceptably over dominant nor undermine the existing verdant open appearance of the appeal property which makes such an important contribution to the character and appearance of the area. Further, as outlined above, existing garages to the front of existing properties are not an uncommon feature within the area and consequently the proposal would not appear as an alien addition within the street scene.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area. Consequently the proposal would accord with Policy EN4 of the Mole Valley Local Plan 2020-2039 adopted October 2024 and Policy BKEN2 of the Bookham Neighbourhood Development Plan 2015-2026 which among other things seek to ensure that development demonstrates good quality design which respects and complements the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Conditions

11. For the avoidance of doubt, I shall impose a condition to ensure the development is constructed in accordance with the approved plans. Moreover, in the interests of good planning and to protect the character and appearance of the area I shall impose a condition to ensure that the materials used match those specified by the appellant.

Conclusion

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

S Rawle

INSPECTOR