The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 October 2015

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 12 October 2015

Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/D/15/3121539
Windways, 159 Satchell Lane, Hamble-le-Rice, Hampshire SO31 4HP

- 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 Roberts against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council.
- The application, Ref. F/15/76213, dated 13 March 2015, was refused by notice dated 12 May 2015.
- The development proposed is the erection of a 2 storey side extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. There are two aspects of the Council's concern, firstly the design quality of the proposed extension and its relationship to the existing dwelling, and secondly the loss of space at the northern flank caused as a result of the development.

4. Turning to the second point first, the dwelling has already had a two storey addition on its southern side constructed in 2012. I agree that this has been carried out in a form that closely reflects the existing appearance of the building. However, this also means that the building is already tight to its southern boundary and this is relevant in my current appraisal of the new proposal.

5. The appeal scheme would result in the dwelling have a similar relationship with its northern boundary, but with an undercroft to maintain access, including for vehicles, to the rear. Even allowing for this space at ground floor level the building would stretch across the full width of the plot, which as I saw on my visit is substantial.

6. The unbroken ridgeline and the row of first floor windows including three dormers already give the building a horizontal emphasis. This is all the more evident in views from the road because of its slightly elevated position and

Windways' stand alone position forward of the house to the south and a considerable distance from Folly's End to the north.

7. In my view the further extension to the edge of the site would accentuate this effect even more, whilst the loss of open space to the side and the encroachment towards the hedge would result in a perception of a dwelling too large for its plot. This would be emphasised by the necessity for, and the appearance of, the undercroft to maintain access to the rear.

8. The undercroft is a design feature more typical in an urban context where building footprint ratios to site areas are higher and the relationship between buildings and site boundaries necessarily tighter. On this site and in a semi rural location it would be out of keeping, and together with the loss of openness and the views past the building to the rear, the effect would be one of a cramped development relative to the plot's width. I consider that this would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area.

9. I have noted that the grounds of appeal refer to other dwellings in the locality having been built across the full width of their sites. However the photographs in some cases illustrate that with buildings of a different design and / or single storey elements this is not a problem, and in other cases that the full width does in fact cause the harmful effect that would occur at Windways if I were to allow the appeal.

10. Turning to the first point of the Council's objection, I agree with the Council that the cropped gable would appear disproportionately large to the existing gabled roofline with the smaller dormers. This would unbalance the appearance of the property and its unduly bulky and dominating effect would be read with the undercroft, which as I have already explained is a poor and unsympathetic design in the context of this dwelling. Taken together, the undercroft and the large gable would draw the eye in a negative rather than a positive way.

11. Overall I conclude that the proposed extension would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of both the existing dwelling and the surrounding area. This would conflict with criterion (i) of Policy 59.BE of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan First Review 2001-2011; the Eastleigh Quality Places Supplementary Planning Document 2011, and Government policy in Section 7: 'Requiring good design' in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

12. I have noted the concerns of the occupiers of Folly's End as regards the boundary hedge, the outlook and overshadowing of the garden and swimming pool. However whilst I can appreciate these additional concerns, I have also noted the Council's comments that they would not be a drawback of the scheme. As I have already concluded on the main issue that the appeal scheme would be unacceptable these further issues do not arise.

13. I have taken into account all the other matters raised for the appellant but have found nothing to alter my conclusion that the appeal should be dismissed.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR