



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 September 2023

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 October 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/D/23/3327140

134 Park Road, Chandler's Ford, Hampshire, SO53 1HQ

- 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 Sanjeev Sharma against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council.
 - The application Ref H/23/94953, dated 27 March 2023, was refused by notice dated 19 June 2023.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a ground floor extension and loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr Sanjeev Sharma against Eastleigh Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a brick built detached, two-storey, double-bay fronted Georgian-style dwelling with a hipped roof, occupying a corner plot fronting Paulson Close, a short cul-de-sac, and with a side return boundary to the east facing Park Road. The dwelling has a single-storey bay window projection across part of its west side elevation with a recessed larger projecting conservatory addition beyond. To the rear, and projecting forward of the dwelling's east, side elevation is a detached, prefabricated single-width garage with a driveway in front accessed from Park Road. The garden to the west side of the dwelling is enclosed by a tall, close-boarded fence. The remaining roadside boundaries are enclosed by lower close-boarded fencing. The area is residential in character comprising a broad range of property types, ages, and appearances.
5. The proposal would see the garage and conservatory removed and a flat, green roof single-storey extension constructed to the rear of the existing dwelling and projecting beyond both of its side elevations. In addition, to accommodate a

loft conversion, dormer windows are proposed to the side and rear roof slopes, with a rooflight to the front elevation.

6. As a corner plot, the appeal property has two elevations fronting a highway. Each is prominent. The principal elevation has a strong visual presence at the reasonably narrow entrance into Paulson Close, appearing as an attractive period dwelling. The east facing side-elevation is seen in the vista along Park Road where, apart from No 134, principal elevations to a range of dwelling types with conventional front gardens prevail. The recessed and largely open frontage to this side of the appeal property allows its unconventional orientation when seen from this aspect to comfortably assimilate itself into the Park Road street scene. Due to the recessed position of the neighbouring property at 136 Park Road, and its open plan frontage, the rear elevation of the appeal property is also largely exposed to view. The existing garage at the appeal site appears anomalous due to its forward siting and materials. However, it is seen as an obvious outbuilding and in my judgement does not significantly detract from the traditional and well-proportioned form of the dwelling, which can be openly appreciated from the public domain.
7. The rear extension would be undeniably large. In plan form it would be wedge-shaped, with its rear elevation following the slightly skewed alignment of the boundary between the appeal site and 136 Park Road. As such, its depth would vary from between 6.9m facing Park Road and around 4.5m facing the side boundary with 4 Paulson Close (despite equivalent measurements being given for both on Drg No PR201 Rev B). It would project just under 10m beyond the west side elevation of the existing dwelling extending towards the boundary with No 4, and over 4.3m beyond the east elevation, projecting forward towards Park Road. Its entire width would measure over 25m.
8. In my opinion, the size of the extension would be vastly out of scale and proportion to the existing dwelling. Its width would span, and far exceed by more than double, the width of the original dwelling, and would be openly seen from beyond the confines of the appeal site along Park Road as a grossly disproportionate addition with an exaggerated horizontal emphasis, and which would show little respect for the traditional architectural composition, form and setting of the original building. Its incongruous presence would be exacerbated by its intrusion forward of the building line fronting Park Road. Whilst I accept that a contemporary approach to extensions can be appropriate in some cases, in this instance I find the use of a solid built form with deeply contrasting materials and fenestration patterns would further draw the eye to an addition that would lack any appropriate level of subservience, but which would instead overtly compete with the visual attraction of the original.
9. The dormer windows would be dominant additions that would significantly alter the profile of the original roof. The combination of their 'box-like' forms, the vertical emphasis to their proportions, and the use of zinc cladding would be uncharacteristic of the dwelling's traditional roof shape, materials, and detailing. The dormers would appear particularly large and incongruous upon the noticeably more modest scale of the side roof slopes, where they would extend up to the hips and close to the eaves.
10. Overall, I find the proposed extensions at both ground and roof level, due to their sizes, siting, and appearances, would fail to complement or respect the character or appearance of the existing house. As such, they would conflict

with the guidance provided within the Council's *Quality Places Supplementary Planning Document*, adopted November 2011, where it deals with extensions to existing residential buildings, including dormers. More significantly, by failing to appear compatible and well-integrated with the existing dwelling and its surroundings, the proposal would conflict with Policy DM1 *General criteria for new development* of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) April 2022. For the same reason there would be conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework's objectives for achieving well-designed places.

Other Considerations

11. I have carefully considered the appellant's options for constructing extensions, outbuildings, and roof alterations as permitted development.
12. No specific proposals for an alternative development to extend the property at ground floor and which could be constructed as permitted development have been put to me. There would be many permutations open to the appellant for completing a variety of extensions and outbuildings as permitted development. It is not for me to design an alternative proposal.
13. When considering the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's publication *Permitted development rights for householders - Technical Guidance* (September 2019), it is evident that any ground floor extensions to the dwelling that could be constructed as permitted development would have little in common with the appeal proposal. I accept that permitted development alternatives would have implications for many aspects of the layout and function of the appeal proposal, but there is no substantive evidence put forward to show support for one approach over the other, other than personal choice. I am not persuaded by the appellant's assertion that other alternatives for extending the property would be inferior in terms of their effect upon the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, which is unsubstantiated by any analysis. Neither do I share their opinion that the proposal would bring about significant advantage by removing an incoherent range of existing buildings, which is not my impression. Furthermore, were planning permission to be granted for the appeal proposal, there would be nothing to prevent existing permitted development rights being exercised where they would still be possible before that permission had been implemented.
14. The ability to construct dormer windows as permitted development is noted. However, there is no Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Use or Development under s192 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 before me to demonstrate that the dormer windows proposed would qualify as permitted development. It is not my role as the Inspector dealing solely with an application for planning permission to determine whether that would be the case.
15. The appellant's ability to extend the property as permitted development at ground floor level, at roof level, and through the erection of outbuildings as a fallback position carries significant weight. However, this is greatly tempered by the fact that any development at ground floor level would be materially different to the appeal proposal and as such I am unable to draw any meaningful comparison between a potential fallback position and a proposal that I find would be significantly harmful. A comparison between the proposed dormer windows and those that could be constructed as permitted

development is easier and I accept that the construction of a comparable scheme in terms of scale would be likely. However, I am not persuaded by evidence that the overall visual impact would be the same.

16. The appellant's need to care for a dependent relative and to make provision for their growing family is noted. I attribute some small amount of weight to this in the overall planning balance, but there is no evidence to show that these needs could only be accommodated by the form of development proposed.
17. I have noted some further concerns expressed by neighbouring occupiers. I share the Council's view that due to the single-storey height of the extension and the separation distances between the respective neighbours' boundaries to the north and west, the ground floor extension would not be unduly overbearing or likely to reduce levels of light or outlook to a degree that would be unacceptable. I also agree with the Council that the proposed dormers facing towards both neighbouring properties would be unlikely to result in any degree of overlooking that would be harmful due to the non-habitable spaces the windows would serve. I am also mindful of the fact that dormer windows of some form could be constructed on these elevations as permitted development with a comparable outlook.

Conclusions

18. For the reasons given, I find that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of 134 Park Road and, by so doing, the wider area. The combined amount of weight that I attach to the appellant's fallback position attributed to their permitted development rights, and to their personal circumstances, is insufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified and the conflict with the development plan and national policy. Accordingly, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR