
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 November 2016

by Jim Metcalf BSc DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 09 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/R3650/D/16/3158268

Upper Lodge, Switchback Lane, Rowledge, Farnham, GU10 4DS

- 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 & Mrs J Marren against the decision of Waverley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref WA/2016/1170, dated 24 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 1 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is extensions and alterations to an existing dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for extensions and alterations to an existing dwelling at Upper Lodge, Switchback Lane, Rowledge, Farnham, GU10 4DS in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref WA/2016/1170, dated 24 May 2016, and the plans submitted with it, 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 following approved plans: 1167 OS-01; 1167 P-101; 1167 P-102; 1167 P-103; 1167 PD-01; 1167 PD-02; 1167 S-101 and 1167 S-102.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (GPDO) 2015 (or any order revoking that Order with or without modification):-
 - a) The extensions authorised by this permission shall not be erected if another extension to the dwelling has been erected pursuant to that Order after the date of this permission or
 - b) No further extensions to the dwelling shall be erected pursuant to that Order in addition to the extension authorised by this permission.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the local countryside.
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Reasons

3. Upper Lodge, a detached house sits in large grounds at the end of a lane, in an area of well wooded countryside. The grounds house various out-buildings and the house has been extended over the years in various ways. It is screened from public view by virtue of its position on the site and the surrounding vegetation. The proposed work would involve a single storey rear extension, a first floor side extension, with a gable roof and dormer window on the front elevation, a chimney on the north elevation, alterations to various windows and the relocation of the front door with a canopy above the new door.
4. In 2104 planning permission was granted for the erection of a new dwelling following the demolition of the existing property at Upper Lodge (04/06/2014). There is every reason to believe this scheme would be implemented, in the absence of alternatives, and I regard it as a 'fallback position' with which the appeal proposal can be compared. Indeed, the appellant has written to the Council to confirm that the extant permission would be implemented in the event that the current application was refused.
5. The Proposals Map of the Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 (LP) shows that the site is located within the Countryside beyond the Green Belt outside any defined settlement area. LP Policy C2 states that building in such areas will be strictly controlled. In more detail LP Policy RD2 states that extensions to dwellings in the countryside beyond the Green Belt will be permitted subject to certain criteria.
6. These criteria seek to ensure that extensions are not disproportionate relative to the original dwelling, are an appropriate design and will not adversely change the character, appearance, bulk and setting of the existing dwelling and will not appear more intrusive in the landscape or otherwise detract from the rural character of the area. To assess whether an extension would be disproportionate the LP explains that account will be taken of the relative increase in floor space together with the form, bulk and height of the proposal in comparison to the original dwelling.
7. Taking into account the history of previous extensions to Upper Lodge the Council concluded that the extensions now proposed would result in a property disproportionately larger than the original house. I find no reason to challenge that conclusion. However, to assess the consequent impact of the extended house on the rural character of the area it is necessary to compare its size, form and design with the house that would be built if the extant planning permission for a replacement dwelling was implemented.
8. The extended house would have a floor space of about 284m² compared with a floor area of about 256m² that would be formed if the replacement house was built. However, the replacement house would be higher, have a gabled roof and a wider front elevation than the existing property. These features would give the replacement property a bulkier appearance than the more 'cottage' style form of the existing building that has a roof with lower eaves and ridge and a hipped design. I find that these differences in form, bulk and height would mean that the house, extended as proposed, would sit more comfortably, and be less intrusive, in the surroundings, than the approved replacement dwelling. In reaching this conclusion I have noted the potential for the replacement house to

be extended once built, subject to planning permission, and the extensions that might be built onto the existing property by virtue of permitted development allowances.

9. I also note that Farnham Town Council has no objections subject to the extension being in keeping with the Farnham Design Statement and all materials used to be in keeping with the existing building. I find that the extensions would be satisfactory in this respect, finished with materials, including some tile hanging that would be appropriate for the rural setting.
10. Strictly speaking the extensions would be in conflict with LP Policies C2 and RD2. However, when compared with the 'fallback' position, the result of the proposed extensions would be a dwelling that would be less intrusive, and more in character, and consequently less harmful to the appearance of the local countryside. On this basis the appeal is upheld.
11. I have imposed standard conditions, limiting the time available to commence development, and to ensure the extensions are built as proposed and with suitable materials. These are needed to ensure the extended house relates satisfactorily to its surroundings and the local countryside. For the same reason a condition is needed to ensure that no further extensions are made to the house.

Jim Metcalf

INSPECTOR