

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 January 2017

by Ray Wright BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: Wednesday 1 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/A3655/D/16/3163607

21 Elmbridge Lane, Kingfield, Woking, GU22 9AN

- 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 Miss Katie Aps against the decision of Woking Borough Council.
 - The application Ref PLAN/2016/0975 was refused by notice dated 21 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is to 'demolish existing single storey side extension and replace with new double side storey side and front single extension.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for demolition of existing single storey side extension and its replacement with a two storey side and front single storey extension at 21 Elmbridge Lane, Kingfield, Woking, GU22 9AN in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref PLAN/2016/0975, dated 16 August 2016, 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: 612- 100, 101, 105, 111, 115, and 120.
 - 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.

Main issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the host property and on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling set back from the road frontage with a front garden area and associated driveway. It has a single storey extension to its boundary which the appeal scheme aims to replace with a two storey side addition.
 4. The appeal proposal includes a single storey front extension with an associated porch feature. The Council raise no objection to this element and due to its design, small scale and form I have no reason to disagree with this assessment.
 5. The National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) indicates that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development. However, the
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Framework confirms that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 (CS) indicates developments should respect and make a positive contribution to the street scene and character of the area in which they are situated. The Woking Design Supplementary Planning Document 2015 (SPD) sets out local design principles. The Council indicate that where two storey side extensions are proposed a gap of 1 metre to the boundary is generally required to avoid a 'terracing' effect.

6. While the properties in the area in which the appeal property is located appear of similar age their form is not wholly uniform. There are pairs of semi-detached dwellings and there are also significant terraces. I have also noted the examples, put forward by the appellant, where semi-detached properties, including some in close proximity to the appeal site, appear to have been the subject of alteration and extension. A number of these changes have resulted in the spacing between dwellings being reduced.
7. The appeal property is linked to a dwelling fronting Queen Elizabeth Way with its gabled flank wall adjoining the appeal dwelling. As such, the proposed extension would not unbalance the pair of dwellings of which it forms a part. The appeal proposal would extend the dwelling to its side boundary with no 23 Elmbridge Lane. No gap would be provided and, as a result, it would enclose the current open area above the existing single storey extension.
8. However, the extension would have a hipped roof so that spacing would be retained at roof level. In addition, no 23 has a gap at ground and first floor level to the common boundary. Consequently, with the appeal development, the properties would not link to form a terrace. To my mind, while the spacing would be less than the Council's normal requirement, the extension would not appear unduly prominent or out of keeping in this particular part of the road. With its compatible design and matching materials, it would suitably relate to the existing house and would not unduly harm the street scene.
9. Overall, therefore, in this case, the proposal would not adversely affect the character or appearance of the host property or wider area. I therefore conclude that the proposed extension would not materially conflict with the Framework, Policy CS21 of the CS or SPD.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Conditions

11. The Council put forward 2 conditions should the appeal succeed. Although not identified the standard commencement condition is required, as is a condition referring to the relevant plans, for certainty. To fully integrate this extension with the existing house and to ensure the details are appropriate for this location, it is important that suitable matching external finishes are used. Therefore, a condition requiring proposed external materials to match the existing is reasonable and necessary.

Ray Wright

INSPECTOR