
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 February 2017

by Colin Cresswell BSc (Hons) MA MBA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 28 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/16/3167702
Troon, Wonham Way, Peaslake, GU5 9PA

- 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 A Lefever against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/P/01875, dated 15 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 11 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is two storey rear extension, a single storey side extension and elevational changes.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed planning permission is granted for two storey rear extension, a single storey side extension and elevational changes at Troon, Wonham Way, Peaslake, GU5 9PA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/P/01875, dated 15 September 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: DC200/01, DC200/02, DC200/03, DC200/04, DC200/05, DC200/06, DC200/07.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this case are:
 - Whether the proposal is inappropriate development for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and any other relevant development plan policies.
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development

3. The appeal property is a detached dwelling situated in a residential street on the edge of a small settlement and within the Green Belt. It is proposed to extend the property to the side and rear to create additional living space.
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4. The Framework makes it clear that the Government attaches great importance to the protection of Green Belts and substantial weight must be given to any development which harms them. It is stated that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence and, consequently, the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate, with a limited number of exceptions. This includes the extension or alteration of a building which does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Policy H9 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 (the Local Plan) indicates that there is a presumption against disproportionate extensions outside settlements within the Green Belt and this is also reflected in Policy RE2. Hence, the Local Plan is generally consistent with the Framework in this respect.
5. Both the Framework and the Local Plan indicate that 'original building' means as it existed on 1 July 1948, or if built after that date, as it was first constructed. In this particular case, the Council indicate that the original floor area of the dwelling was 149.07 m², the existing floor area is 205.21 m², and the total floor area of the dwelling including the proposed extension would be 240.66 m². These calculations indicate that the overall effect of the proposal would result in a dwelling with a total floor area approximately 61% greater than the original.
6. The appellant has drawn my attention to Appeal Decisions where extensions larger than 61% have been approved within the Green Belt. I do not have the full details of these cases or any indication of whether they were considered to be inappropriate development or not. As such, I give these decisions limited weight in my consideration of this issue.
7. Nonetheless I am mindful that paragraph 5.39 of the Local Plan advises that small extensions, even where there have been a number of previous extensions to the original dwelling, will not necessarily be refused. In this case, I do not consider that the proposed extension would lead to a disproportionate extension even when it is compared against the original dwelling. Despite the resultant increase in floor area, in three-dimensional terms, the proposal would not result in the building appearing considerably more bulky than it does at present. Hence, the spatial impact would be limited.
8. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not be inappropriate development. There would be no conflict with Policies H9 and RE2 of the Local Plan.

Effect on character and appearance

9. In visual terms, the Council accept that the extension would be in keeping with the property in terms of scale and design. Indeed, I agree with the appellant that the proposed development would lead to some improvement in the appearance of the property as the flat roof of the existing extension would be incorporated into a more vernacular hipped roof design. The removal of the existing car port would also be of aesthetic benefit.
10. The appeal property is situated within the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). However, as the extension would be visually integrated with the built form existing property and of a relatively modest size, it would not be easily discernible from within the wider surroundings and the scenic beauty of these designated landscapes would not be harmed.

11. I therefore conclude on this issue that the proposed development would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area. There would be no conflict with Policies RE5 and RE6 of the Local Plan which seek to protect landscape quality. There would also be no conflict with Policies G1 and G5 of the Local Plan which seek good standards of design.

Conclusion

12. For the above reasons, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be allowed. In the interests of clarity, standard conditions have been imposed requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the plans and within a time limit

Colin Cresswell

INSPECTOR