
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 July 2020

by S Shapland BSc (Hons) MSc CMILT MCIHT

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4 August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N1730/D/20/3246960

Dukes Field Cottage, Norton Road, Riseley Reading RG7 1SH

- 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 Justin Rogers against the decision of Hart District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/02705/HOU, dated 4 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 5 February 2020.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension and single storey rear extension following demolition of conservatory.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for two storey side extension and single storey rear extension following demolition of conservatory at Dukes Field Cottage, North Road, Riseley Reading RG7 1SH, in accordance with the terms of application, Ref 19/02705/HOU dated 4 December 2019, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: PL-01 Location Plan dated 17 April 2019, PL-03 Existing and Proposed Block Plan dated 17 April 2019, PL-04 Existing Floor Plans dated 17 April 2019, PL-05 Existing Elevations dated 17 April 2019, PL-06 Proposed Site Plan dated 17 April 2019, PL-07 Proposed Plans dated 17 April 2019, PL-08 Proposed Elevations dated 17 April 2019, PL-09 3D Images (external) dated 17 April 2019, PL-10 3D Images (internal) dated 17 April 2019.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council has included policies from the Emerging Hart Local Plan – Strategy and Sites 2016-2032 within their decision notice. In accordance with paragraph 48 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), weight may be given to policies within emerging plans. The weight given is determined by the stage of the preparation of the emerging plan, the extent of unresolved objections and the degree of consistency of relevant policies to the Framework. I have not been provided with any substantive details of the status of this emerging plan, and therefore I attribute them very limited weight.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a detached cottage which is traditional in design, and includes a thatched roof and porch on the front elevation, and conservatory at the side and rear. The site is set back a considerable distance from the public highway, and is access via a long private drive. The host dwelling is set within a large plot, which is well screened by mature vegetation. The proposal includes a two storey side extension, which would align with the front elevation of the host dwelling, but would have a lower ridge and eaves height. A dormer window is also proposed within this front elevation. At the rear of the property a single storey rear extension is proposed, which would span the full width of the dwelling.
5. Whilst the proposal is of a considerable scale, I find that the proposed design would assimilate well with the host dwelling. The proposed dormer window in the front elevation whilst not matching the existing fenestrations would integrate well with the front elevation and current designs of the openings. Furthermore, the lower ridge height and eaves height would give the proposal a degree of subservience from the host dwelling. The use of matching materials, which could be secured via a planning condition, would ensure that the new build elements do not appear incongruous with the host dwelling. As such I am satisfied that the proposal would not appear as visually discordant to the appearance of the host dwelling.
6. The appeal site is situated within the village of Riseley, and is therefore located within the countryside. Policy RUR24 of the Hart District Council Local Plan 1996-2006 (LP) seeks amongst other things, that extensions of dwellings in the countryside do not materially change the impact of the dwelling on the countryside, or results in an enlarged dwelling disproportionate in size of the original dwelling. The Council have raised concerns that the scale of the proposed extension is not in keeping with the host dwelling, and is disproportionate in size when compared to the original dwelling.
7. The policy does not explicitly consider what constitutes an extension which is disproportionate in size. In this instance, whether the extension is disproportionate, requires an element of judgement on behalf of the decision maker. I note that the Council has sought to demonstrate that the proposal would represent a 69% increase of floorspace, this is a figure which is disputed by the appellant. In any event, as the policy does not have a specific threshold as to how much additional floorspace should be considered disproportionate, it is a matter of planning judgement. I am mindful that the property benefits from permitted development rights which would allow for a large single storey extension on the rear without planning permission being required. In this respect, the proposal is only marginally larger than would be permissible under these permitted development rights.
8. Furthermore, as I have indicated above, I consider that the appeal proposal is well designed and would integrate well with the host dwelling. The dwelling is situated in a large expansive plot, and as such within this wider context the larger dwelling would not look out of keeping with its surroundings. The

proposal would be of a design which integrates well with the host dwelling, and I do not consider that the scale of the proposal would be disproportionately large when compared to the host dwelling.

9. Consequently, I find that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling. There is no conflict with policies GEN1, GEN4 and RUR24 of the Hart District Council Local Plan 1996-2006. Together these policies seek, amongst other things, that extensions to dwellings in the countryside are of a high quality design that respects the character of the area. I find no conflict with

Conditions

10. In addition to the standard time limit condition I have imposed a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. This is in the interest of certainty. A condition relating to external materials is necessary to ensure that the appearance of the proposed development would be satisfactory. The Council's reason for refusal also makes reference to the Framework. Whilst I have not been directed to specific areas of conflict, I find the proposal would accord with section 12 and the aims to ensure the creation of high quality development.

Conclusions

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

S Shapland

INSPECTOR