

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 October 2020

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25/11/2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3825/D/20/3249095

1 Motto Cottage, Sandhills Road, Barns Green, Horsham, RH13 0PU

- 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 Clarke against the decision of Horsham District Council.
 - The application Ref DC/19/2318, dated 12 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 12 February 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as "*Extension to the side and rear of existing semi-detached property*".
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted to erect a two-storey rear and side extension at 1 Motto Cottage, Sandhills Road, Barns Green, Nr Horsham, RH13 0PU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DC/19/2318, dated 12 November 2019, 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: Drg Nos 615-01 Rev A and 615-02 Rev A.
 - 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.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of the development in my formal decision reflects the description that was given on the decision notice and which was repeated on the appeal form. This better reflects the nature of the proposal compared with the description that was given on the application form.
3. The application was amended through the submission of revised plans, which I have relied upon.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing building and the wider area, including the setting of a Grade II Listed Building.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is one half of a semi-detached pair of traditional, two-storey cottages set within a rural village that comprises a mix of property types and ages ranging from the listed 17th Century detached dwelling known as 'Shyngells', neighbouring the appeal site, to other more contemporary dwellings slightly further afield. The proposal is to extend the dwelling to the side and rear with a two-storey, wrap-around addition.
6. The Council has considered the appeal property to be a non-designated heritage asset. However, there is no evidence to show what mechanism has been used to identify No 1 as such, or indeed the criteria upon which it has been based other than vague references to its origins and appearance within the officer's report. Neither have I been directed to any published 'Local List' or other public record. Nevertheless, I recognise the importance of achieving high quality development that is well designed and sympathetic with the existing character of the built surroundings, including the historic environment, all as required by Policies 32, 33 and 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF), adopted in 2015.
7. The existing semi-detached pair at Motto Cottages are fairly prominent in the street scene, being set further forward than neighbouring dwellings to each side and with shallow front gardens. Despite their apparent symmetry and simplicity, I was struck by the marked difference to the setting of each individual dwelling. No 2 has a narrow plot and a reasonably close relationship with the two-storey 'Galliards' immediately to the south, a fairly contemporary dwelling of no special merit. In contrast, No 1 has a much wider plot with open space to the side and with a further gap to the building at Shyngells to the north. In addition, No 2 has been fairly comprehensively and sympathetically extended to the side and rear, with No 1 openly seen to have a range of much less sympathetic side and rear additions at just single-storey.
8. The extensions would replace the existing single-storey additions and would undeniably be large. However, there is ample space to the side of No 1 to accommodate the width of the extension. A noticeable gap of 5m measured to the side boundary would be retained such that the enlarged building would appear comfortable in its plot. The side addition would be recessed behind the building's front elevation by just over half a metre. In my opinion this would be sufficient to provide it with a degree of subservience, and to distinguish the original vernacular form of the building, which would stand proud and clearly legible. The rear extension would reflect the scale and design of the addition to the rear of No 2, as highlighted by the Council. In addition, the plans clearly identify the use of appropriate materials and detailing, including the use of multi-coloured stock bricks and matching brick bonding. My impression overall is that the extension would achieve the design quality required by HDPF Policies 32 and 33 by sympathetically relating to the existing building and its surroundings. I am unable to detect any impact upon Motto Cottages that

would conflict with the requirements of HDPF Policy 34, which deals specifically with cultural and heritage assets.

9. Shyngells is a Grade II Listed Building. There is a statutory duty under Section 66(1) of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for me to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
10. The listing description for Shyngells simply describes the architectural detailing of this restored, two-storey, 17th Century (or earlier) house. The building's immediate setting is within its own residential curtilage set behind a fairly shallow and vegetated frontage. It has a close relationship to the dwelling immediately to the north and a considerably more spacious relationship with 1 Motto Cottage to the other side, derived from space either side of the shared common boundary. This is marked by fairly tall and dense vegetation which further reinforces the separation.
11. More widely, Shyngells is seen as part of residential street scene, with the building sitting amongst a run of dwellings of mixed appearance and age along the east side of Sandhills Road. Due to its more recessed position relative to other properties adjacent, I saw that it has a fairly muted visual presence in views either way directly along Sandhills Road, becoming only more apparent from the public domain when seen from the village green opposite and the wider more expansive views this open space provides.
12. The side extension of No 1 would unquestionably alter the size of the gap between Motto Cottage and Shyngells. However, a sizable gap would still remain between the buildings. There would also be a substantial gap between the new gable end of No 1 and the common side boundary between the plots, which would remain to reinforce an obvious division. There would be a very clear and unambiguous separation between both buildings. I could detect no encroachment towards the adjoining listed building that would have any perceptible impact upon the visual, functional, or historic aspects of the surroundings insofar as they affect the significance of Shyngells as a heritage asset. I am satisfied therefore that there would be no harm to the setting of a Grade II Listed Building and no conflict with HDPF Policy 34 in this regard.

Conditions

13. The Council's appeal questionnaire does not include any suggested conditions. However, in addition to the standard time limit, a condition specifying the relevant plans is necessary as this provides certainty. I also consider that a standard condition requiring the use of matching materials is reasonable and necessary in order to safeguard the character and appearance of the area. This should be uncontentious as matching materials have been clearly described on the application form.

Conclusions

14. For the reasons given, I am satisfied that there would be no harm to the character or appearance of the existing building and the wider area, or to the setting of a Grade II Listed Building. There would be no conflict with the development plan or with the National Planning Policy Framework as it relates to achieving well-designed places and conserving and enhancing the historic

environment. Accordingly, in the absence of any other conflict with the development plan, the appeal is allowed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR