



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 November 2020

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/L3625/D/20/3257897

Seymour, Haroldslea Drive, Surrey, RH6 9PH.

- 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 Roger Kidd against the decision of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00671/HHOLD, dated 26 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 26 May 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as a two storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey rear extension at Seymour, Haroldslea Drive, Surrey, RH6 9PH in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/00671/HHOLD, dated 26 March 2020, and the plans submitted with it, 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: 334/1, 334/2, 334/3, 334/4, 334/5, 334/6, 334/7, 334/9 and location plan.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) The proposed finished floor levels should be no lower than existing floor levels or 300 millimetres (mm) above the estimated flood level.

Preliminary matter

2. In their officer report and decision notice the Council refers to policy CS3 of the Reigate and Banstead Core Strategy 2014, which relates to development in the Green Belt. As the appeal site is not located within the Green Belt it is assumed that this policy was referred to in error and so has not been taken into consideration in the assessment of the appeal proposal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area of countryside.

Reasons

4. The Appeal site is located within an area of low-lying countryside between the built-up area of Horley and the M23. It is an area that is characterised by dispersed dwellings and other buildings of various sizes, small enclosed paddocks, larger fields, areas of woodland and smallholdings.
5. The appeal site comprises a smallholding located mid-way along and to the south of Haroldslea Drive, which is a narrow private road. It is one of a number of properties within the immediate area that are accessed via private drives, off Haroldslea Drive. The appeal property comprises a detached two storey dwelling and includes a number of outbuildings. The dwelling is set within large gardens that are enclosed by mature trees and hedges. Beyond the gardens are small paddocks that are similarly enclosed by trees, hedges and small clusters of woodland.
6. Policy NHE7 of the Reigate and Banstead Local Plan Development Management Plan 2019 (DPD), seeks to protect the countryside around Horley and with this in mind states that extensions to buildings must maintain and not compromise the character of the countryside and landscape. Consistent with this paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (Framework) states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Paragraph 127 of the Framework seeks to ensure that new development is sympathetic to local character and adds to the overall quality of the area.
7. The appeal dwelling has been extended over the years and currently comprises a part two and part one and half storey dwelling. It has cream painted rendered walls under a plain tiled roof, which includes a number of dormer windows and an element of flat roof at the rear. Also, at the rear of the property is a conservatory and a timber lean-to canopy, which together project across the whole of the rear elevation at ground floor level. Due to its utilitarian design and choice of materials the lean-to structure has a degrading impact on the appearance and quality of the dwelling. Other than this structure, the existing dwelling blends in readily with its immediate surroundings and respects the existing rural character and appearance of the locality.
8. With the proposal, the flat roofed canopy would be removed and the existing northern rear wing would be extended into the rear garden by four metres. The extension would be less than half the width of the existing dwelling and would sit below the main ridge height of the dwelling. The scale, form and detailing of the proposed two storey extension would respect and be consistent with the existing dwelling and in particular the existing rear two storey projection.
9. Subject to the use of matching materials, which can be secured through the imposition of a condition, the proposed extension would be indistinguishable from the main two storey part of the dwelling. The resultant dwelling would sit comfortably within its generous sized gardens and in terms of height, mass and bulk would not be unduly large or out of keeping with other dwellings in this area of countryside.

10. There would be generous sized gaps between the proposed extension and the side and rear boundaries of the garden and the extension would be partially screened from the adjoining paddocks which are owned by the appellant. From the private drive to the front of the property the proposed extension would be fully screened by the existing dwelling.
11. For these reasons, the resultant dwelling would be readily assimilated into its immediate setting and would maintain the Character and appearance of the surrounding countryside.
12. Finally, in addition to a materials condition, the Council has suggested the imposition of conditions relating to finished floor levels and adherence to the submitted drawings. These conditions are necessary to ensure that flood risk is managed and in the interests of certainty.
13. I conclude that the proposed extension would maintain and respect the character and appearance of the area of countryside in which it is located and the rural setting of Horley. Accordingly, it would comply with policy NHE7 of the DPD and paragraphs 127 and 170 of the Framework.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR