

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 September 2021

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 October 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/APP/N1730/D/21/3275197

The Bourne, Redlands Lane, Crondall, Farnham GU10 5RF

- 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 Dr and Mrs Adrian Williams against the decision of Hart District Council.
 - The application, Ref. 21/00737/HOU, dated 11 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 14 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is a second storey extension at the front and side of the house.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted at The Bourne, Redlands Lane, Crondall, Farnham for a second storey extension at the front and side of the house in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. 21/00737/HOU, dated 11 March 2021 and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development to which this permission relates shall begin not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this Decision;
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: OS based Location Plan; OS based Block Plan; Existing Floor Plans and Elevations; Proposed Floor Plans; Proposed Elevations;
 - 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 is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and its surroundings.

Reasons

3. The Council's concern is that *'Adding a first floor would markedly change the character of the building in a way that the single storey extensions have not. The design of the enlargement is such that it would over-urbanise a former rural outbuilding, to the detriment of the character of the building and of the wider setting'*.
-

4. However, whilst within a countryside setting, the site is for the most part visually self-contained. And to the limited extent that the existing building is read with its nearest neighbours, Ashley Bourne is a very substantial two storey house; there are large two-storey houses to the side of the driveway in the form of 'Kadina' and its neighbour, and the doctors' surgery is a building of significant size with an extensive footprint.
5. Far more significant in terms of 'over-urbanisation' and any impact on the character of the wider rural setting is the western edge of the Cala Homes housing development currently under construction. From the driveway to The Bourne and its access to its detached garage it can be seen that due to a combination of their size and siting on higher land, the rear gables of two of the dwellings so far built dominate the skyline. They are perceived as being overbearing and significantly detract from the rural setting of the appeal site and its surroundings.
6. I acknowledge that the origins of The Bourne were a timber outbuilding in the grounds of the property now called Ashley Bourne with a then more rural and undeveloped setting. However, I consider that the appeal proposal for an additional floor should be informed by the current context of large two storey buildings, the surgery and the significantly adverse impact of the Cala Homes development.
7. I agree with the officer's report that overall, the design of the proposed additions reflects the unique appearance of the existing building. Whilst the Council might have sought amendments to resolve their concerns over some details, this is not possible in this appeal. However, having assessed the submitted plans I share the appellants' view that the existing building is of a high quality design and that the proposed additions (prepared by the original architect) would be in keeping with its unique character and appearance.
8. In summary, I conclude that the proposed additions would neither adversely alter the character and appearance of the host building nor have a detrimental effect on the character and setting of the countryside. Accordingly, there would be no conflict with Policy NBE9 of the Hart Local Plan (Strategy & Sites) 2032 adopted in 2020; Saved Policies GEN1 and RUR1 of the Hart Local Plan - Replacement 1996-2006; Policy 3 of the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan (2017 - 2032 Referendum Plan) and Government policy in Section 12 : 'Achieving Well-Designed Places' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.
9. In allowing the appeal and granting permission a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved (un-numbered) drawings is needed for the avoidance of doubt and is in the interests of proper planning. A condition requiring matching external materials will safeguard the character and appearance of the dwelling and the visual amenity of its surroundings.
10. The Council has also suggested a condition requiring four parking spaces to be retained on the site, but whilst I acknowledge that the building will be larger in floorspace there is room in front of the dwelling and the access to the garage for four cars to park. A condition formally requiring parking space retention is unreasonable for a domestic extension and in any event unnecessary because

the difficulty of parking in Redlands Lane provides every incentive for residents' and visitors' cars to park within the dwelling's curtilage.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR