

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 January 2022

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

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4 February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/A3655/D/21/3288701

34 Horsell Park Close, Horsell, Woking GU21 4LZ

- 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 Mrs P Bidnell against the decision of Woking Borough Council.
 - The application, Ref. PLAN/2021/0449, dated 20 April 2021 was refused by notice dated 9 November 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a part two storey, part single storey rear extension; hip to gable roof extension and rear dormer, and single storey front extension. Conversion of integral garage to habitable space and insertion of 5* No. rooflights to front elevation (*amended to four).
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a part two storey, part single storey rear extension; hip to gable roof extension and rear dormer, and single storey front extension. Conversion of integral garage to habitable space and insertion of 4 No. rooflights to front elevation at 34 Horsell Park Close, Horsell, Woking in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. PLAN/2021/0449, dated 20 April 2021 and as subsequently amended, and subject to the conditions in the attached Schedule.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of Nos. 34 & 35 as a pair of semi-detached dwellings and the street scene of Horsell Park Close in respect of the gap to No. 33.

Reasons

3. Turning firstly to the appeal scheme's impact on the host dwelling and No. 35, the other half of the semi-detached pair, the original building as two semi-detached houses can still be identified as a handed pair with symmetrical first and ground floor fenestration and a continuous tiled roof canopy above the bay windows and front entrance doors.
 4. Whilst this remaining symmetry is aesthetically pleasing, its impact on the street scene is no longer significant because of the visual impact of the two storey side extension to the host dwelling and the ground floor extension at No. 35. As the two dwellings are no longer read as a balanced pair of semi-detached dwellings, I am unable to support the Council's argument that the hip to gable roof extension would 'unbalance the pair' to the detriment of the character and appearance of the street scene.
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5. The Council's other concern is that the massing and design of the hip to gable extension would be harmful because it would visually close the separation gap to the neighbouring property at No. 33. However, the existing gap of a couple of metres between the two flank walls is sufficient to provide a noticeable separation between the two dwellings and there are views through the gap to trees and hedges in the rear gardens. Furthermore, this gap is the distance that remains following the approval of two storey side extensions at both Nos. 33 and 34.
6. The existing separation above eaves level is also enhanced by the fact that because of the rising land level towards the end of the cul-de-sac, the eaves and ridge of No. 34 are at a lower height than the eaves and ridge of No. 33. The proposed hip to gable would reduce the space between Nos. 33 and 34 but because the gable would be flush with the flank wall it would maintain the existing separation between the two dwellings. The amendment of the design of the proposed gable to introduce a barn hip is also helpful in reducing the bulk of the extension and maintaining a meaningful gap to No. 33. It is also consistent with the extensions referred to in paragraph 7 below.
7. For the appellant, reference has been made to the roof extensions at Nos. 21, 24 and 37 as precedents for the appeal proposal. Whilst I do not regard these as precedents, as each case must be considered on its individual merits, it is nonetheless true that the original character and appearance of the Close is now more varied than in its original form. And for the reasons explained above, I consider that in the particular circumstances of this case there would be no unacceptable harm to the street scene.
8. Accordingly, I see no clear conflict with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012; the Council's Design SPD 2015, and Section 12: 'Achieving Well-Designed Places' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.
9. In allowing the appeal I shall impose conditions. A condition requiring the matching of external materials will ensure a harmonious form of development and maintain visual amenity, whilst a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans is needed for the avoidance of doubt and is in the interests of proper planning.
10. Conditions requiring the obscure glazing of the proposed flank window and the preclusion of any additional windows by the removal of permitted development rights will safeguard the privacy for adjoining occupiers. A tree protection condition will safeguard an existing garden tree in the interests of amenity.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development to which this permission relates shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this decision;
- 2) 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;
- 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing Nos. 1610-200; 1610-201; 1610-205; 1610-211; 1610-212 Rev. A; 1610-215 Rev. A; 1610-220 Rev. A;
- 4) The window in the first floor north (side) elevation hereby permitted shall be glazed entirely with obscure glass and non-opening unless the parts of the window which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above the internal floor level. Once installed the window shall be permanently retained in that condition;
- 5) Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) no window, dormer window, roof light, door or other additional openings other than those expressly authorised by this permission shall be formed at first floor level or above in the north and south (side) elevations (including the roof) without planning permission being first obtained from the Local Planning Authority;
- 6) The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the tree protection measures in the Arboricultural Information Report provided by Harper Tree Consultancy (Ref. 2021025 v1.0) received on 23 April 2021, including the convening of a pre-commencement meeting and arboricultural supervision as indicated. No works or demolition shall take place until the tree protection measures have been implemented. No deviation from the works prescribed or methods agreed in the report shall take place without the prior written approval from the Local Planning Authority.