
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 May 2022 by A Coombes

Decision by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/21/3284827

Orange Grove, Littleton Lane, Guildford GU3 1HN

- 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 and Mrs P Good against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/P/00507, dated 10 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 27 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is the conversion of an ancillary outbuilding and a single storey attached extension for the purposes of providing 'Wellness' facilities serving the main house, together with associated external works alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and permission is granted for the conversion of an ancillary outbuilding and a single storey attached extension for the purposes of providing 'Wellness' facilities serving the main house, together with associated external works alterations at Orange Grove, Littleton Lane, Guildford GU3 1HN, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 21/P/00507, dated 10 March 2021 and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development is hereby permitted and shall begin no 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: the location plan, the site plan, and drawing number TP04 (dated March 2021).

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and Development Plan Policy;
 - if found to be inappropriate development, the effect of the proposal on openness and the purpose of including the land in the Green Belt and whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly

outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site comprises of a large, two-storey detached property, along with a number of ancillary buildings and intervening landscaping, situated within a generous curtilage within the Metropolitan Green Belt. It is within the Littleton Conservation Area (LCA) and the surrounding area is rural in character with a mixture of property types, some of which are listed. The proposal seeks permission to extend the outbuilding to accommodate wellness facilities to serve the main house.
5. Some outbuildings may be considered as extensions to a main dwelling on the basis that they are normal domestic adjuncts. Given the modest size and use of the existing outbuilding to which the extension is proposed, and its close proximity to the main house, it appears to be a 'normal domestic adjunct'. Therefore, it would be appropriate that any extensions to this building, for the purpose of Green Belt calculations, are not considered in isolation but collectively with the main house.
6. The planning history provided by the Council indicates that the building permitted in 2014 replaced an agricultural workers cottage. The site visit confirmed that this building is situated a considerable distance from the main dwelling, is serviced by its own driveway and hardstanding and is separated from the main house by an extensive landscaped garden. Therefore, it should not be considered on the same basis as the outbuilding, as a 'normal domestic adjunct', and should not be included in the Green Belt calculations.
7. Although a full detailed planning history is not before me, the evidence indicates that the main house has not been significantly extended and that the works that have taken place are largely due to the conversion and alterations of the existing buildings. The appellant has provided some calculations from an officer report for a previous application, and as indicated above, the 2014 development should be discounted from these totals.
8. Whilst the proposed extension would significantly increase the footprint, mass, bulk and volume of the outbuilding, it would still remain a modest development when considered in conjunction with the main dwelling. The extension would be set fairly far back to the side of the property and largely hidden from the street scene, due to its relationship with the main dwelling. There have been some contemporary alterations to the main dwelling and the proposed development would not appear out of character within this context.
9. For the reasons given above, the proposal would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and therefore would accord with Policy P2 of Guildford borough Local Plan: strategy and sites 2015-2034, adopted 2019, and the provisions of the Framework, specifically Chapter 13. As a result, the proposal would, by definition, not have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt or the purposes of including land within it. Furthermore, there is no requirement to assess if there are other considerations that amount to very special circumstances.

Conditions

10. The standard time condition should be attached, as well as a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, to provide certainty.

Conclusion and Recommendation

11. The proposal would accord with the Development Plan when it is considered as a whole. For the reasons given above, I recommend the appeal should be allowed.

A Coombes

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

12. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is allowed.

K Taylor

INSPECTOR