



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 June 2022 by C Glaister BSc (Hons)

Decision by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/21/3288730

Peartree Cottage, Holmbury Hill Road, Holmbury St Mary RH5 6NP

- 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 Peter Franks against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/P/01310, dated 10 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 27 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as a "Rear extension and interior remodelling of Pear Tree cottage".
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a rear and infill extension at Peartree Cottage, Holmbury Hill Road, Holmbury St Mary RH5 6NP in accordance with the terms of application Ref 21/P/01310, dated 10 June 2021 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: 295-PL-05 (Block Plan and Site Plan), 295-PL-06 Rev A (Ground Floor Plan), 295-PL-07 (Roof Plan), 295-PL-08 (North Elevation), 295-PL-09 Rev A (East Elevation), 295-PL-10 (South Elevation) (all dated 10.05.21).
 - 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.

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.

Procedural Matter

3. The description used in the banner heading above is taken from the application form. In the interests of clarity, it is recommended that the description provided in the officer report is used for the formal decision in this appeal.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:

- whether the proposal would be inappropriate in the Green Belt for the purposes of the development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) (the Framework); and
- if the proposal would be inappropriate development, whether it would affect openness, 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 it.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Inappropriate Development

5. Paragraph 147 of the Framework states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 149 states that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt, with the exception of, among other things, the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. The Framework defines 'original building' as the building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after this date, as it was built originally. Policy P2 of the Guildford borough Local Plan: strategy and sites 2015 – 2034 (April 2019) (the Local Plan) largely reflects the policy provided in the Framework.
6. The property is a modest bungalow, sited on a residential road in a quiet village with verdant rural surroundings. The site features a spacious garden that declines in elevation away from the house, and the property is comfortably separated from its neighbours. The dwelling has been previously extended, increasing the floor area by 35.6%. This is not disputed between parties. However, the Council state that when including the proposal, the floor area would be increased by 70.4% from the original building, whereas the appellant suggests that the previous extension together with the proposal would only amount to a 63% increase.
7. Whilst an increase in the floor area of 70.4% would be relatively significant, a percentage increase in floor area is not the only relevant consideration. The overall effect of the extensions in combination would not be proportionally excessive. The proposal would include a small flat-roof infill extension that would have a negligible effect on the form of the property. The rest of the extension would be relatively limited in its effect on the property as a whole. It would be located towards the middle of the property at the rear, and would follow the pitched form of the roof together with the addition of one smaller flat-roof element. The general form of the dwelling overall would therefore remain largely unchanged.
8. For these reasons, the proposal would not be inappropriate development. It would therefore accord with Policy P2 of the Local Plan and the Framework. As the proposal does not amount to inappropriate development, the proposal would not by definition have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt, and there is no requirement to assess if there are other considerations that amount to very special circumstances.

Conditions

9. Conditions relating to the commencement of the development, and that the development adheres to the plans submitted, are recommended in order to provide certainty. A condition ensuring the external materials match the existing building would be necessary in the interests of the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Conclusion and Recommendation

10. The proposal is therefore seen to conform with the development plan as a whole. Based on the above, and having regard to all matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed.

C Glaister

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

11. 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