



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 December 2022

by C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/G2245/D/22/3304631 44 Wellfield, Hartley DA3 7EQ

- 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 Russell Coombs against the decision of Sevenoaks District Council.
 - The application Ref. 22/00793/HOUSE, dated 21 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 28 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is part single, part two storey, rear and side extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for part single, part two storey, rear and side extensions at 44 Wellfield, Hartley DA3 7EQ in accordance with the terms of the application Ref. 22/00793/HOUSE, dated 21 March 2022, 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: Y1023/2021/01, Y1023/2021/02, Y1023/2021/03, Y1023/2021/04, Y1023/2021/05, Y1023/2021/07, Y1023/2021/08, Y1023/2021/09.

3) Notwithstanding condition 2, the external finishes and windows of the development hereby permitted shall match in material, colour, size and shape those of the existing dwelling.

4) The bathroom window on the first floor east-facing wall hereby permitted shall be fitted with obscured glazing (to at least Level 3 on the Pilkington Levels of Privacy, or such equivalent as may be agreed in writing with the local planning authority), and no part of those windows that is less than 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which it is installed shall be capable of being opened. Once installed the obscured glazing shall be retained thereafter.

Preliminary Matter

2. My attention has been drawn to a previous appeal on the site that was dismissed in January 2022 (Planning Inspectorate reference APP/G2245/D/21/3277332). I shall have regard to this background when considering the merits of this proposal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the local area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site relates to a semi-detached, two-storey dwelling with off-street parking to the front. It is set within a neighbourhood comprising houses of differing size, design and detailing. The wider area is predominantly residential in nature.
5. Although I note the reasoning within the previous appeal decision, this revised proposal would retain a gap to the side boundary at ground and first floor level. This would ensure that some sense of spaciousness is preserved between the appeal property and 46 Wellfield. The removal of the barn end roof would reduce the mass and bulk of the scheme at this level.
6. The development before me would broadly match the extension to the adjoining semi-detached unit when viewed from the public domain. As such there would be a restoration in the symmetry of the built form overall, which is a benefit of the scheme. Overall, in my view the scheme would visually connect with the overall appearance of the host dwelling, without dominating it, and respond to the original design characteristics.
7. While the extensions to the rear are large and deeper than that advocated in the Sevenoaks Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2009 (SPD), these elements of the scheme will have limited impact upon the character or appearance of the surrounding area given the separation and screening from public viewpoints.
8. I conclude on this matter that the proposed development would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area. It would be in accordance with Policy EN1 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan Development Plan Document 2015, Policy SP1 of the Sevenoaks Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2011 and the SPD, which cumulatively seek to ensure new development of acceptable scale and design.

Conditions

9. I have considered the imposition of conditions in light of advice in Planning Policy Guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework. I have altered the wording of some of the conditions suggested by the Council in the interests of clarity and necessity. In addition to the standard implementation condition, the approved plans are listed for certainty.
10. A condition requiring external materials to match those on the existing dwelling would provide for a satisfactory appearance; as part of this condition, I have referred to window size and shape as the plans are inaccurate in this regard, showing openings that are smaller than existing.
11. Obscure glazing to the new first floor bathroom window in the side elevation would protect the living conditions of the occupants of neighbouring houses. I do not consider it reasonable or necessary to restrict any permitted development rights on the property.

Conclusion

12. For the above reasons, the appeal is allowed.

C Hall

INSPECTOR