

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 March 2023

by **D Cramond** BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3825/D/22/3312272

The Haven Cottage, The Haven, Billingshurst, RH14 9BG

- 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 & Mrs P Cave against the decision of Horsham District Council.
 - The application Ref DC/22/1598, dated 19 August 2022, was refused by notice dated 21 October 2022.
 - The development proposed is the conversion of loft, incorporating installation of 2no rooflights, creation of a pergola to the rear and associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the conversion of loft, incorporating installation of 2no rooflights, creation of a pergola to the rear and associated works at The Haven Cottage, The Haven, Billingshurst, RH14 9BG in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DC/22/1598, dated 19 August 2022, subject to the following condition:
 1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 2233/01 & 02.

Preliminary Matters

2. I use the Council's description of development which is more comprehensive than the application forms; I note the Appellants also use this description on the appeal form.
3. The development has been partially completed; this does not alter the way in which I assess the merits of the case.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a relatively recent chalet bungalow with a half-hipped high-ridge roof in a sizeable corner plot with scattered varied residential development on three sides and agricultural land to the west. The dwelling is unremarkable within this rural hamlet of established character and the locality as a whole has a pleasing countryside appearance. The proposal is as described above. The rooflights are wider than many one encounters and of
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sizeable, almost floor to ceiling, height with a positioning largely above existing rear dormers on the rear elevation of the property.

6. 'Permitted development' rights were removed at the time of the dwelling's planning permission (DC/14/0239) in 2014. In terms of the proposed development, the Council is concerned that this size, position, and number of roof lights would represent poor design being disproportionate to the host property. It is put that this is a cluttered roofscape adding visual dominance and verticality to the built form and failing to relate sympathetically to the dwelling.
7. The roof lights are certainly large but equally the roof slope and building as a whole are substantial and the ridge is comparatively high; I don't get a sense of the windows being 'squeezed in'. Numerically having two focussed areas of glazing appears appropriate when there are three dormers. Contrary to the Appellant's assertions the rear elevation is open to public view, from parts of the lane to the side and rear, but I did not find the scene to be unsettling, strident or alien. Interestingly the three-dimensional view is more at visual ease in reality than on two-dimensional plans. I found the almost flush glazing to appear similar to solar panels of which there are a few to be seen locally. In this particular instance I would not class the roofscape as being a cluttered or otherwise unacceptable proposition.
8. Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) are relevant. Taken together and amongst other matters these policies seek to achieve good quality design via attractive and functional development which is of appropriate scale, appearance and finishes. For the reasons given above I conclude that there would be no conflict with these policies.

Other matters

9. I have carefully considered the points raised by nearby residents. I am content that in terms of overlooking the additional glazing does not impose upon the most sensitive amenity space of the adjoining rear garden; angles of sight and existing dormers provide sufficient blinkers for this. There are no other factors raised which individually or collectively would outweigh my conclusion on the main issue.

Conditions

10. I agree with the Council suggestion; to provide certainty, there should be a condition requiring that the development would be carried out in accordance with listed, approved, plans.

Overall conclusion

11. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would not have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the host property or the locality. Accordingly, the appeal is allowed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR