



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 April 2023

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/A3655/D/23/3316520

21 Cavendish Road, Woking, GU22 0EP

- 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 Stuart and Rosanna Long against the decision of Woking Borough Council.
 - The application Ref PLAN/2022/0709, dated 21 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 22 November 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as the erection of a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension following demolition of existing rear conservatory.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension following demolition of existing rear conservatory at 21 Cavendish Road, Woking, GU22 0EP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref PLAN/2022/0709, dated 21 July 2022 and the plans submitted with it and 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 single storey rear extension hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 2204-21CR-002 Rev.A, 2204-21CR-003 Rev.A, 2204-21CR-004 Rev.A, 2204-21CR-005 Rev.A and 2204-21CR-006 Rev.A.
 - 3) Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted a revised location, site and block plan shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority, which reflects the footprint of the proposed single storey extension, as shown on drawing No. 2204-21CR-005 Rev.A. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the revised site and block plan approved by the local planning authority.
 - 4) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extensions hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing dwelling.
 - 5) The first-floor window in the south side elevation of the two-storey extension hereby permitted shall be glazed entirely with obscure glass and non-opening below 1.7 metres of the internal floor level. Once installed the window shall be permanently retained in that condition unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Preliminary matter

2. There is a small draughting error on the site/bloc plan reference 2204-21CR-001 Rev A. It shows the proposed rear extension projecting up to the northern elevation of the existing conservatory, whereas the existing and proposed floor and elevation drawings clearly show that it only projects up to the southern edge of the existing workshop. Having regard to the minor nature of this error it can be satisfactorily dealt with by condition and has not affected my ability to determine this appeal.

Main Issues

3. The first main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the locality. The second main issue is whether the resultant property would provide satisfactory living conditions for its occupiers, with particular regard to private garden space.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site is located within a verdant suburban residential area. Cavendish Road is characterised by a diverse range of single, one and a half and two storey dwellings, constructed from a range of materials including brick, render, tile hanging, under a mixture of prominent gabled and fully hipped plain tiled roofs. Many of the dwellings have single and two storey front projections that have prominent gable roof features. There are also a number of pitched and flat roofed front facing dormer windows and occasional catslide roof features. The dwellings occupy varied sized and often irregular shaped plots, which includes a number of small irregular shaped rear gardens. The dwellings are typically located close to their plot side boundaries and are set back from the highway behind varied sized and enclosed front gardens.
5. The appeal site occupies a wide plot and has an irregular shaped rear garden, which varies considerably in depth. The appeal dwelling is asymmetrically designed and comprises a two-storey house, with catslide roof detail on the front elevation and an attached garage/workshop on the northern side with a mono-pitched roof. There are two gable projections on the front elevation and to the rear is a conservatory extension at the northern end of the dwelling. The appeal dwelling is situated close to the northern boundary of the site and there is a generous sized gap between the southern elevation of the house and the side boundary of the appeal site. There is similarly a generous sized gap between adjacent dwelling to the south and the adjacent side boundary of the appeal site.
6. Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 (CS), requires proposals to make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area. They should pay regard to the characteristics of adjoining buildings and ensure that schemes provide appropriate level of private amenity land. Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (the Framework), similarly seeks to ensure that new development is of high-quality design, reflects the distinctive character of the area and addresses the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape. Developments should provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

7. Section 9D of the Woking Design Supplementary Planning Document 2015 (SPD-D), advises that the layout of an extension should enhance the existing property. That additional mass should respect the existing buildings proportions, symmetry and balance and roof additions should normally be similar to the existing building. The size and location of extensions should not compromise the private garden amenity of the host or adjacent gardens.
8. Section 4 of the Woking Local Development Framework 2008 - Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight Supplementary Planning Document (SPD-A), recommends that family dwellings should be provided with suitable sunlit private amenity space that is appropriate in size and shape to meet the needs of the occupiers of the dwelling. In existing residential areas, the size, shape and position of gardens should reflect the existing context and be in proportion to the size of the dwelling.
9. Appendix 1 of the SPD-A advises that large family houses with a gross floor space of over 150m² should have a private area that is greater than the gross floor area of the dwelling. For dwellings with a floor area of between 65 and 150m² should have a private garden area that is greater than the building's footprint. It goes on to advise that the quality of the garden area and compatibility with the character of the local context will be of greater importance than the suggested minimum garden sizes.

Character and appearance

10. The proposed two storey extension would project into the open area on the southern side of the dwelling and is designed to appear as an integral part of the dwelling rather than an extension to it. The proposed two storey extension would mirror the design and appearance of the existing large gable and catslide features, although it would be both wider and taller than the existing. This would retain the asymmetrical appearance of the house and is reflective of the use of front gable projections both on the host dwelling and within Cavendish Road.
11. The proposed rear extension would be visually uncluttered and modest in depth, height and form. It would respect the uncluttered appearance and horizontal lines of the rear elevation host dwelling, as well as the ground floor canopy feature on the front elevation.
12. A generous sized gap would be retained between the proposed two storey extension and the side boundary of the site. In addition, the gap between the side boundary and the adjacent dwelling to the south would add to the sense of space around the appeal dwelling.
13. The size of the resultant front garden would remain comparable to or larger than other front gardens within the immediate and wider area. It would provide sufficient space for three parking spaces, a pedestrian access and meaningful areas of soft landscaping. To the rear of the dwelling, the most usable part of the garden is at the northern end. With the proposal this area would be slightly increased in depth with the demolition of the existing conservatory. The southern part of the rear garden would be shallow, although it backs onto the large rear gardens of the adjacent dwellings, which front onto Triggs Close. This adds to the sense of space around the appeal property.

14. As a result of these factors the proposed extensions would respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene. The resultant dwelling would appear spaciouly sited both on the plot and within the street scene and would respect the spatial characteristics of Cavendish Road. This is subject to adherence to the submitted drawings and the use of matching external materials. As suggested by the council these things can be secured through the imposition of planning conditions.
15. I conclude on the first main issue that the proposal would respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene. It would therefore comply with CS Policy CS21, paragraph 130 of the Framework and the objectives of the SPD-D.

Proposed living conditions

16. The council has stated that the resultant dwelling would have a gross floor area of approximately 143m². Whilst no dimensioned plans have been submitted this figure appears incorrect and that the proposed gross floor area would be greater and would exceed 150m². The council also states that the proposed garden area would be 95m², although this does not include the area of land to the south of the resultant dwelling. The appellant has confirmed that the resultant private garden area would be at least 150m² and would be compliant with the stated requirements.
17. Whilst no precise dimensions have been provided, from the drawings submitted it would appear that the proposed private garden area would exceed the footprint of the existing house, but would not exceed the overall floor area of the resultant dwelling. As such it would not comply with the minimum private garden size, unless the front garden was also taken into account.
18. However, this is not the end of the matter as the SPD advises that the quality of the garden area and its compatibility with the character of the local context is of greater importance than size.
19. As stated above the most usable part of the existing rear garden (northern section) would be retained and slightly increased in size. Also, the area of garden to the south of the proposed extensions would be used as garden space rather than for car parking. Both of these areas adjoin other spacious gardens and would benefit from favourable southerly and westerly aspects.
20. The appellant has advised that the front garden would accommodate three parking spaces and it is noted that the existing garage would be retained. This complies with the councils parking standards and should be ample to meet the usual day to day parking requirements of the occupiers of a four-bedroom family dwelling in this location.
21. Overall, the proposed resultant garden space would satisfactorily meet the needs of the occupiers of the property and would be in keeping with the varied spatial standards within Cavendish Road.
22. I conclude on the second main issue that the proposed private garden space would be satisfactory to meet the needs of the occupiers of the resultant dwelling. It would therefore comply with CS Policy CS21, paragraph 130 of the Framework and the objectives of SPD-A and SPS-D.

Conditions

23. In addition to the suggested materials and plans conditions, the council has suggested the imposition of a condition which requires the first-floor window in the southern elevation of the two-story extension to be obscure glazed and to have restricted opening. I agree that this condition is necessary and reasonable to protect the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjacent dwelling to the south.

Conclusion

24. Having regard to the conclusion on both main issues, the appeal is allowed.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR