



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 May 2023

by G Roberts BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 May 2023.

Appeal Ref: APP/R3650/D/23/3318191

Maroussi, Weydown Road, Haslemere, GU27 1DR

- 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 Normanton against the decision of Waverley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref. WA/2022/02319, dated 13 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 16 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is detached garage with room over.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for detached garage with room over at Maroussi, Weydown Road, Haslemere, GU27 1DR in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. WA/2022/02319, dated 13 September 2022, and the plans submitted with it and subject to the conditions listed below.
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
 - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those on the existing host building or otherwise be in accordance with those in the application form.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 11/158-002; 11/158-003; 11/158-004; 11/158-005; 11/158-006; 11/158-007.
 - 4) The building hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes incidental to the residential use of the dwelling known as Maroussi, Weydown Road, Haslemere.

Application for Costs

2. An application for costs was made by the Appellant against Waverley Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. I have adopted the description of development as set out in the application form as this more accurately describes the proposal. In this respect, I agree with the Appellant that this reflects the 'incidental' purpose of the proposed

building rather than the wording 'ancillary accommodation' as set out in the Council's decision notice.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. The appeal site is located on the eastern side of Weydown Road and occupies a corner site with its southern boundary fronting onto Derby Road. It comprises a two storey detached dwelling set within a very generous plot. Towards the northern corner of the appeal site are large wooden gates that provide access for vehicles to Weydown Road. Other than this and a pedestrian gated access further to the south, the western boundary comprises a mixture of high fencing and hedging that continues along the sites return boundary with Derby Road. The height of the fencing/hedging is such that the lower floor of the host property is largely screened from public views.
6. The Haslemere Design Statement – Design Guidelines (2012) (HDS) contains non-statutory planning guidance to assist with decision making. It divides Haslemere into areas, with the appeal site located within 'Area 3 – North of Town Centre'. The HDS states that within this Area Weydown Road and Derby Road contain some of the largest houses in Haslemere and that it is essentially a low density residential area comprising large plots where trees, hedges and verges are an essential feature of the area. The latter reflects my own observations on site, with a large number of the properties on Weydown Road set back behind mature trees and vegetation that effectively screen any views of those properties from the road.
7. As with the appeal site some of the properties in the road are more visible from public vantage points due to their frontages being open or the individual properties being sited closer to the road. A number of properties have been extended including the adjoining property to the north, Trelawney, where I understand its existing linked two storey extension was approved in 2013. There are also examples of approved outbuildings including a large garage building at Wildwood (further to the north west), albeit it is well screened from the road.
8. The appeal proposal involves the construction of a detached garage (car port) with store and a room above to be used as a gym/home office. The new building would be sited close to the boundary with Weydown Road and in between the main vehicular and pedestrian accesses to the site on an area of front garden currently laid to lawn with some low planting. The hipped roof of the new building would include solar panels and two small dormer windows, the latter facing into the appeal site. The pallet of materials would include facing brickwork and timber, with plain clay tiles on the roof and dormers to match those on the host property.
9. Planning permission previously existed for a detached double garage on this part of the appeal site. This approval was obtained in November 2012 (ref. WA/2012/1565) but was never implemented and has since expired. Even so, I agree that this permission is an important material consideration in the context of this appeal and I note in this respect that the Council's Delegated Report

(CDR) states that, in their view, the relevant test was whether the current proposal would materially be more harmful than the 2012 permission. In terms of the latter, I understand that the approved building was some 5.9 metres wide, 6.3 metres long and had a ridge height of 5.9 metres (and not 2.9 metres as set out in the CDR). In comparison, the appeal proposal would be some 6.3 metres wide, 9.7 metres long, with a ridge height of 6.0 metres (and not 6.3 metres as set out in the CDR). The CDR also refers to the visibility of the proposed building as a result of its gable ends, whereas the proposed roof would be hipped at both ends.

10. Although the appeal building would be visible above the existing boundary hedge/fence, as I observed on site it would largely be the upper part of the building that would be visible, namely its timber cladding, eaves and hipped roof, with the latter slopping up and away from the road boundary. As such, the proposal would principally be viewed against the backdrop to the host property when approaching from the north on Weydown Road or against the backdrop to the linked extension to Trelawney when approaching from the south. It would also be sited on part of the site where you commonly expect to see such outbuildings and where the Council previously accepted the principle of a similar outbuilding in 2012.
11. Whilst I accept that the bulk, massing and length of the proposed building would be greater than that approved in 2012, the resulting difference or increase would, in my view, be modest. Although there would be a material change in the appearance of this part of the appeal site compared to that approved in 2012 and as currently exists, I am satisfied that any impact arising from the proposed building would not be significant or harmful to the host or to the streetscene. As I confirmed earlier, the host property is located within a substantial plot that is more than sufficient to accommodate an outbuilding of the size and scale proposed. I also consider that the design of the proposal would be a high quality and in keeping with the appearance of the host property and its local context. Overall, the proposal would result in a development that sits comfortably on this part of the appeal site.
12. As well as the HDS the Council have referred to saved policies D1 and D4 of the Waverley Borough Local Plan (2002) (WLP), policy TD1 of the Waverley Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Policies & Sites (February 2018) (LPP1), policy H6 of the Haslemere Neighbourhood Plan 2013 – 2032 (November 2021) (HNP) and its Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (October 2010) (Extensions SPD). These seek, amongst other requirements, to ensure that new development is: of a high quality; integrates well with existing built development; is appropriate in terms of its scale, height, layout and form; avoids any harm to the visual character and local distinctiveness of the area; and does not dominate the streetscene and is not unduly prominent. For the reasons set out above, I am satisfied that the proposed building would comply with all of these requirements and at the same time make full and effective use of the land. Moreover, the existing hedge would be retained and there would be no loss of any existing trees or verges, features which, as I confirmed above, the HDS identifies as being essential characteristics of the area. Similarly, it would not impact on any important vistas.
13. Further support for my findings is provided by paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) (Framework) which adopts a broadly similar approach to the development plan but also states that being

sympathetic to local character should not prevent or discourage appropriate innovation or change. This approach is reinforced in paragraph 44 of the National Design Guide (NDG) (January 2021) where it states that well designed places do not need to copy their surroundings and that it is appropriate for new development to include innovation and change to reflect how we live today. As I confirmed earlier, the proposal would involve a high quality design, a building that would be appropriate for the site and would integrate well with the wider streetscene.

14. Accordingly, I find that the appeal proposal would be compliant with policies D1 and D4 of the WLP, policy TD1 of LPP1, policy H6 of the HNP, the guidance within the HDS and Extensions SPD and the corresponding policies of the NDG and Framework.

Conditions

15. I have considered the Council's suggested conditions against the advice in the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance chapter on the use of planning conditions. A condition requiring compliance with the submitted plans is necessary and reasonable to secure a high quality development. I have however added a list of plans for clarity. In relation to materials, this condition is also necessary and I have worded it to require the materials to match those on the host property or otherwise as shown in the application form. I also agree, in this instance, that a condition to control the purpose of the appeal building is reasonable. However, I have amended the Council's suggested wording to reflect the fact that the proposal before me is for a garage, store and gym/office, which would be 'incidental' to the use of the host property and that planning permission was not sought for 'ancillary residential accommodation' in the form of, for example, an annex.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above and having taken all the matters raised into account I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

G Roberts

INSPECTOR