

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 November 2023

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14.12.2023

Appeal Ref: APP/L3625/D/23/3323531

5 Russell Close, Walton On The Hill, Tadworth KT20 7QH

- 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 Neil Dickinson against the decision of Reigate & Banstead Borough Council.
 - The application, Ref. 23/00177/HHOLD dated 27 January 2023 was refused by notice dated 19 April 2023
 - The development proposed is a new roof with dormers; a new roof with room over garage; an infill side and rear extension; a change of external finishes.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a new roof with dormers; a new roof with room over garage; an infill side and rear extension; a change of external finishes at 5 Russell Close, Walton On The Hill, Tadworth in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. 23/00177/HHOLD, dated 27 January 2023 (amended 21 March 2023) and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development to which this permission relates shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this Decision;
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing No. Series 01456: Plans: PL01; PL02; PL03 Rev. A; PL04 Rev. A; PL05 Rev. A;
 - 3) The external materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall be first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority;
 - 4) The window to the bathroom in the eastern elevation shall be obscure glazed; non-opening to a height of 1.8m above the finished floor level, and thereafter permanently retained in that form.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings.
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Reasons

3. The officers' report summarises the appeal scheme as including an approximate increase in roof height from 5m to 6.6m which would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. In addition, the design of the extended building is considered as being poor, with too much difference to the nearby single storey dwellings with their shallow pitched roofs.
4. However whilst I have noted these objections, on my visit to the site and its surroundings I observed that the properties in Russell Close are discreetly sited within mature landscaping. The appeal dwelling is a case in point and as the grounds of appeal observe, is for the most part tucked away from the streetscene. With that said, in the approach from the Close along the driveway to the dwelling the higher profile of a neighbouring property, No. 21 Greenways, is clearly visible.
5. Within this context I consider that the Council's objections are unfounded. The limited height increase of 1.6m to form a chalet bungalow would not draw the eye as being out of keeping with the surroundings, especially given that the two storey No. 21 Greenways is immediately to the east. The proposed contemporary design would be far superior to the 1960s largely formulaic and bland appearance of the existing building, with the glazing in the proposed gables providing modernity and the amended dormers now in accordance with the Council's design guidance.
6. Accordingly, I find that there would be no harm caused to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings and no conflict with Policy DES1 of the Reigate and Banstead Development Management Plan 2019. Nor would the proposal be contrary to Government policy in Section 12: 'Achieving Well-Designed Places' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.
7. For the reasons explained above, I shall allow the appeal. A condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans is needed for the avoidance of doubt and is in the interests of proper planning. A condition stipulating the Council's prior approval of external materials will ensure that the dwelling's appearance is of a high standard and will preserve the visual amenity of the area. Finally, a condition precluding views from a bathroom window by obscure glazing will safeguard a neighbour's privacy.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR