

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 January 2024

by Mr C J Tivey BSc (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7 February 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/A3655/D/23/3330480
39 Courtenay Road, Woking, Surrey GU21 5HG

- 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 Shabbir Hussain against the decision of Woking Borough Council.
 - The application Ref PLAN/2023/0444, dated 14 May 2023, was refused by notice dated 26 July 2023.
 - The development proposed is for a single storey front extension, two storey rear extension and single storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the 'Framework') was published in December 2023, but there are no material changes relevant to the substance of the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the two storey rear extension upon: the character and appearance of the area; and the living conditions of the occupants of 41 Courtenay Road, with specific reference to daylight.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal dwelling is located broadly within the middle of a modern terrace of houses, the rear elevations of which are highly exposed from a road known as Courtenay Mews. I noted both within the subject terrace and the terrace due south west that a number of dwellings have had two storey extensions constructed to their rear. Whilst it is not generally for me to comment on the appropriateness of these or otherwise, the flat roof extensions appear far more incongruous within the street scene than those with pitched roofs, and when found adjacent to another one, look particularly prominent.
5. The Woking Design Supplementary Planning Document (adopted February 2015) (WDSPD) requires that roofs of extensions should normally be of a

similar format to that of the existing dwelling. Whilst as noted above, I observed the other first-floor rear extensions that closely mirror the design and nature of the proposed development, as acknowledged by the appellant these were permitted prior to the adoption of the current Development Plan and the WDSPD; ultimately however, each case must be assessed on its own merits.

6. I note that there is no objection to the principle of extending the dwelling subject to an assessment of all material considerations. I acknowledge that the applicant seeks to improve their family's living conditions by extending their property, although I am not convinced that from a design perspective, what is before me is the only solution. I also note the concerns raised with regard to the impact that the extensions to no37 have had on the natural light received by the host dwelling, however, it is for me to assess the proposal, the subject of the appeal on its merits.
7. On this issue I find that the proposed flat roof form over the rear extension would represent poor design and would be at odds with the host dwelling's pitched roof form, contrary to the WDSPD. It would appear incongruous within the Courtenay Mews street scene, further accentuating the existing proliferation of similar such extensions that were built in the past. I therefore find that the proposal conflicts with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) (WCS) which requires proposals for new development to, amongst other things, create buildings and places that are attractive with their own distinct identity and which respect and make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area in which they are situated.

Living Conditions

8. 41 Courtenay Road retains its original dining room window opening on its rear elevation. This is not identified on the proposed Block or Floor Plans, however I consider that it is reasonable to concur that the single storey rear extension would conflict with this in plan form due to its overall depth and the fact that it would run along the shared boundary. However, the proposed rear ground floor extension would replace an existing infill structure and therefore there would not be a significant change in this respect. It is quite clear that the two storey element of the proposal would reduce outlook to some degree from the neighbouring window, although it would be set away from the boundary and in the absence of any evidence from the Council to substantiate their case, I consider that any loss of daylight resulting from the proposal as a whole upon the neighbouring dining room window would not be significant. Therefore, I consider that the proposal would achieve a satisfactory relationship to the adjoining property, avoiding a significant harmful impact in terms of loss of daylight, based on the evidence before me.

Conclusion

9. Having regard to the above and all other matters raised by the appellant, I conclude that the appeal be dismissed.

C J Tivey

INSPECTOR