



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 October 2024

by C Rose BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/C3620/D/24/3337405

Holmwood Post Office, 9 Warwick Road, South Holmwood Surrey RH5 4NP

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Daniel and Emma Poyastro-Pearson against the decision of Mole Valley District Council.
 - The application Ref is MO/2023/1654/PLAH.
 - The development proposed is Garage conversion of derelict garage to office/storage/library – ancillary to main house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for Garage conversion of derelict garage to office/storage/library – ancillary to main house at Holmwood Post Office, 9 Warwick Road, South Holmwood RH5 4NP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref MO/2023/1654/PLAH, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing nos: 004 Site Location Plan; 004 Revision No.05 Proposed Floor Plans; and 005 Revision No 05 Proposed Elevations.
 - 3) The use of the building shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwelling known as Holmwood Post Office, 9 Warwick Road, South Holmwood, Surrey RH5 4NP.
 - 4) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no windows, rooflights or dormer windows other than those expressly authorised by this permission shall be constructed within the roof of the building hereby permitted.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development in the banner heading above is taken from the application form as neither party has provided written confirmation that a revised description has been agreed.
3. During the course of the appeal the Council advised that they adopted the Mole Valley Local Plan 2020-2039 (MVLP) on the 15 October 2024. This Local Plan replaces the Mole Valley Local Plan October 2000 and The Mole Valley Local

Development Framework Core Strategy October 2009. In light of this, the main parties were given an opportunity to provide comments in relation to their cases and the adoption of the MVLP and I have taken these into account. In light of the MVLP now forming the adopted development plan for the area, I have considered the proposal against the relevant policies in this plan.

4. Subsequent to the decision of the Council on the planning application, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) became National Landscapes (NL). Therefore, in relation to this appeal, reference to the National Landscape refers to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty as referred to by the main parties.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. The appeal site comprises a semi-detached two-storey dwelling occupying a corner location at the junction of Warwick Road and Norfolk Road. This part of the village is residential and characterised with the buildings comprising a mix of designs and materials. Some properties benefit from garage or outbuildings that are generally subservient to the main dwelling and single storey.
7. To the rear of the appeal dwelling is a series of linked outbuildings which include a carport, pitch roofed garage, pitched roof store and flat roofed store. The carport and garage are accessible from Norfolk Road with off-street parking to their frontage, whereas the stores are within the rear garden of the appeal dwelling separated from the parking spaces by a solid fence. As a result, the outbuildings appear more in context with Norfolk Road. The garage building already includes a part upper floor served by a window that was boarded up at the time of my site visit and as a result is already taller than other nearby garages and outbuildings.
8. As with the previous proposal on the site¹, the current proposal would slightly extend the garage roof upwards to provide a full second storey of accommodation within the roof. However, in comparison to the previous proposal, it does not seek to extend the ridge height of the store building, leaving this single storey, albeit with slightly higher eaves. However this would not be readily visible from the street. Furthermore, the garage door and existing window to the street frontage would be retained keeping the building's functional ancillary appearance alongside the use of materials in keeping with those used in the local area.
9. In light of this, and although I acknowledge that the building would remain taller than other outbuildings nearby, it would nonetheless retain its appearance as an outbuilding and remain subservient in nature to the main dwelling. Moreover, its appearance would be enhanced through re-use, refurbishment, and the re-introduction of the window, and it would not have a dominating effect in the street scene or harm the road's overall appearance.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, it complies with MVLP Policies EN3 and EN4. Amongst other things, these seek to ensure that scale and

¹ MO/2022/0814/PLAH and related Appeal Reference APP/C3620/D/22/3303471

design is otherwise acceptable when assessed against other relevant policies in the Plan, is of a high-quality design that make a positive contribution to its local character and respects, contributes to and enhances the local environment and character.

Other Matters

11. The appeal site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt and would constitute an extension or alteration of a building. In light of my findings above and given the very small increase in the height of the proposal with no additional footprint, it would not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building. Consequently, in accordance with Paragraph 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) it would not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt. It is noteworthy that the Council have not raised any concerns in this regard and there is nothing before me to contradict my findings in relation to this.
12. The appeal site is also in a National Landscape. Paragraph 182 of the Framework states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Landscapes. The Council have not raised any concerns in this regard, and due to the surrounding built form and siting of the proposal, I have no reason to disagree and find the special qualities of the NL would not be adversely affected.

Conditions

13. I have had regard to the tests in the Framework in relation to conditions and to the conditions suggested by the Council. In addition to the standard time condition, it is necessary for a condition to confirm the approved plans in the interests of certainty.
14. Conditions are also necessary to ensure that the building remains ancillary to the residential use of the host dwelling and to prevent the insertion of any additional windows or rooflights within the roof in order to protect the living conditions of nearby occupiers.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above the appeal should be allowed.

C Rose

INSPECTOR