



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 December 2024

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

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N1730/D/24/3351461

Oak Cottage, Tadpole Lane, Ewshot, Farnham GU10 5BX

- 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 Mr Andrew Cullen against the decision of Hart District Council.
 - The application Ref. is 24/01187/HOU.
 - The development proposed is a single storey extension at ground floor. Proposed First Floor Extension. Proposed conversion of existing detached garage into home office.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for is a single storey extension at ground floor; a proposed first floor extension and a proposed conversion of the existing detached garage into a home office at Oak Cottage, Tadpole Lane, Ewshot, Farnham GU10 5BX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. 24/01187/HOU, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this Decision;
 - 2) Unless indicated otherwise on the approved plans, the materials to be used on the external surfaces of the development hereby approved shall match those used in the existing buildings;
 - 3) The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved Plans: Existing Drawing Nos. Series 016_A_00_: Plan Nos. 001; 050; 100; 101; 102; 200; 201; 202; 300; 301; 302; 303; 304; 305; Proposed Drawing Nos. Series 016_A_10_: Plan Nos. 001; 050; 100; 101; 102; 200; 201; 202; 300; 301; 302; 303; 304; 305;
 - 4) The development shall be carried out in full accordance with the details set out in 'Section 4: Recommendations' of the Report: 'Bat Scoping Survey: Oak Cottage. Ewshot: Reference C1214.001 dated 4 September 2024 and prepared by Crossman Associates.

Background and Main Issue

2. The Officer's Report makes it clear that there are no objections as regards the details of the proposal and its effect on Oak Cottage. However, as Oak Cottage is a Pre-World War One building located in a rural location within 200m of woodland and has a number of features which could support roosting bats, the Council considered that an initial bat survey should be carried out.

3. As this was not done before the expiry of the prescribed period for determination of the application, a Notice of Refusal was issued. Accordingly, the main issue is whether there is sufficient information to adequately assess the impacts of the proposal on biodiversity, including protected species.

Reasons

4. The application was refused on 16 August 2024. The applicant commissioned a Bat Scoping Survey by professional ecological consultants and the report was published on 4 September 2024. The Report concludes that '*The buildings have negligible suitability for roosting bats*'. I have read the report and I am satisfied with its contents and recommendations.

Conclusion and conditions

5. I consider that the application details and the ecological report when taken together indicate that the appeal scheme would be compliant with Policy NBE4 of the 'Hart Local Plan (Strategy and Sites) 2032' adopted in April 2020; Section 15: 'Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment' of the National Planning Policy Framework December 2024, and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. I shall therefore allow the appeal.
6. A condition requiring matching external materials will ensure a harmonious form of development and maintain visual amenity. 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. Finally, a condition requiring the development to incorporate the recommendations of the Ecological Report will provide the necessary environmental safeguards and secure biodiversity enhancements as part of the development.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR