



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 June 2025

by Mrs Chris Pipe BA(Hons), DipTP, MTP, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31 July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/A3655/D/25/3364418

144 Goldsworth Road, Woking, Surrey GU21 6NE

- 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 Alf Lessnau against the decision of the Woking Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is PLAN/2025/0021.
 - The development proposed is erection of a single storey rear extension, lowering of kerb, and creation of front hardstanding and associated hard and soft landscaping including retaining wall.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for the erection of a single storey rear extension, lowering of kerb, and creation of front hardstanding and associated hard and soft landscaping including retaining wall at 144 Goldsworth Road, Woking, Surrey GU21 6NE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref PLAN/2025/0021 and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions set out below:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans: Site and Block Plan, no. 2406-144GR-001, Rev A4, dated 23.01.2025; Parking and Street Scene, no. 2406-144GR-002, Rev A4, dated 23.01.2025; Side 1 Elevations, no. 2406-144GR-006, Rev A4, dated 23.01.2025; Side 2 Elevations, no. 2406-144GR-007, Rev A4, dated 23.01.2025; Ground Floor Plans, no. 2406-144GR-008, Rev A4, dated 23.01.2025; First Floor Plans, no. 2406-144GR-009, Rev A4, dated 23.01.2025; Loft Floor Plans, no. 2406-144GR-010, Rev A4, dated 23.01.2025; Roof Plans, no. 2406-144GR-011, Rev A4, dated 23.01.2025; 3D Views, no. 2406-144GR-012, Rev A4, dated 23.01.2025; and Sections, no. 2406-144GR-013, Rev A4, dated 23.01.2025,
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the hereby approved development, excluding the area of hardstanding, shall match that of the existing built form.
 - 4) No above ground level works associated with the hereby approved creation of front hardstanding and associated hard and soft landscaping including retaining wall shall be carried out until details of the retaining wall, including levels and visibility splay shall be provided to and approved in writing by the

Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the proposed development shall be carried out and be retained in accordance with the approved details.

- 5) The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the hereby approved parking spaces have been laid out in accordance with the approved plans. Thereafter the parking area shall be retained for the designated purpose.
- 6) The new hardstanding hereby permitted shall be made of porous materials, or alternatively provision shall be otherwise made to direct run-off water from the new hardstanding hereby permitted to a permeable or porous area or surface within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse.
- 7) The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the dwelling is provided with an Electric Vehicle charging point in accordance with a scheme to be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the proposed development shall be carried out and be retained in accordance with the approved details

Procedural Matters

2. The Council changed the description of development from that stated on the application form in the interests of clarity. I consider that the amended description accurately describes the appeal scheme and accordingly I have adopted an amended description in the heading above.

Main Issues

3. The Council did not raise issue with regard to the proposed single storey rear extension, from the information before me and from my observations during my site visit, I agree.
4. The main issues in this appeal are the effect of the proposed development to the front of the property on (i) the character and appearance of the host property and area in general; and (ii) highway safety.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

5. The site is located within a predominantly residential area; the appeal property is a two-storey detached property which sits at a higher ground level to the highway. The property benefits from off street parking to the rear of the property accessed via a drive between the property and No. 146 Goldsworth Road.
6. I observed during my site visit that many of properties in the area have hardstanding to the front, which form part of the character and appearance of the area. The difference in level between the highway and property would require the excavation of material from the site and provision of retaining walls, the submitted plan: Sections, no. 2406-144GR-013, Rev A4, details the proposed level of the drive which slopes down from the existing property towards the highway. This sloped area of hardstanding, excavation of material and provision of retaining walls would not be out of keeping with the immediate area.

7. My attention has been drawn to an allowed appeal¹ at No. 148 Goldsworth Road I note that the description of development does not include the provision of hardstanding to the front, however I note that the Inspector references *other alterations proposed such as the modifications to the driveway would not be materially harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area*. Notwithstanding this I have not been provided with any evidence to assess that scheme against the proposal before me.
8. Nevertheless, I find that the works to create front hardstanding, lowering the kerb, pedestrian access and associated hard and soft landscaping including retaining walls would not harm the character and appearance of the host property and area in general.
9. There is no conflict with Policy CS21 of the Woking Local Development Document, Woking Core Strategy (2012) (the Core Strategy) which seeks amongst other things for developments to respect and make a positive contribution to the street scene and character of the area.
10. There is no conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (the Framework) which seeks to ensure developments are of good design, appropriate and sympathetic to their surroundings.
11. The proposed development does not conflict with the Woking Design SPD (2015) which provides design guidance and good practice to improve the quality of design in new development across the borough.

Highways Safety

12. The Council confirm that the proposed off-street parking for 2 vehicles would be acceptable for the appeal site. I note that the County Highway Authority have not objected to the proposed development, however, have recommend conditions are attached to any approval.
13. The proposed conditions relate to layout of the parking spaces, the installation of a Electric Vehicles charging point and visibility zones. The Council consider that ensuring the layout is in accordance with the approved plans and the provision of an EV charging point can be controlled via the imposition of planning conditions, I agree.
14. The Council advance that in relation to the provision of visibility zones these should be kept permanently clear of any obstruction over 1.05m high, a plan/details have not been provided by the appellant to demonstrate this. Nevertheless, I observed during my site visit that a low wall exists along the front of many properties with off-street parking. The proposal would remove the existing wall fronting the appeal site however the wall to No. 142 would remain. The provision of parking spaces adjacent the existing wall at No. 142 would be similar to other properties in the area. Notwithstanding this due to the proposed creation of retaining walls a condition controlling the final detail of these could be imposed to ensure visibility was not restricted.
15. I am mindful that the Framework confirms that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network,

¹ APP/A3655/D/23/3331607

following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios. Given the proposal is similar to existing off-street parking in the area, and the lack of objection from the County Highway Authority I have not been provided with substantive evidence to confirm that the proposed development would result in unacceptable impact on highway safety or that the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

16. I conclude that the proposed development would not harm highway safety. There is no conflict with Policy CS21 the Core Strategy and the Framework which seek amongst other things for developments to encourage sustainable means of travel and have an acceptable impact on highway safety.

Conclusion

17. For the above reasons I conclude that this appeal should be allowed.
18. I have imposed a standard condition relating to the commencement of development and conditions specifying the relevant plans and parking layout as this provides certainty. In order to safeguard the character and appearance of the area and the carriageway from potential water run-off I have imposed conditions concerning materials.
19. I have attached a condition relating to details for the retaining wall, levels and visibility splay in the interests of highway safety.
20. I have imposed a condition relating to the provision of an Electric Vehicle charging point, whilst the Council suggests specifications for the minimum requirement, I have not been provided with substantive evidence to support this requirement.
21. The Council have suggested a condition relating to the submission of a landscaping scheme however I am not persuaded that this is necessary based on the proposed development and the surrounding context.
22. A condition relating to pedestrian inter-visibility splay has been proposed by the Council, however I have not been provided with substantive evidence that supports its inclusion. Whilst the appellant confirms this condition was attached to the approved development at No. 148, I have not been provided with evidence to confirm this. The appeal decision does not include such a condition, and I have not been provided with relevant documentation relating to the scheme² to widen the front driveway which according to the appellant has been approved by the Council.

Chris Pipe

INSPECTOR

² PLAN/2023/0982