
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 September 2016

by S J Papworth DipArch(Glos) RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 22 September 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3825/D/16/3153560

Brackenburn, Spinney Lane, West Chiltington, West Sussex RH20 2NX

- 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 & Mrs Nick Salkeld against the decision of Horsham District Council.
 - The application Ref DC/16/0292, dated 5 February 2016, was refused by the Council by notice dated 8 April 2016.
 - The development proposed is extension to provide attached open sided double carport and accessible storage in roof space over.
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Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal.

Main Issues

2. These are;
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Spinney Lane area of West Chiltington Common.
 - The effect of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbouring residential occupiers with particular regard to outlook and light.

Reasons

Generally

3. Horsham District Planning Framework Policy 1 states the principles of sustainable development and Policy 2 states the principles of strategic development. Development principles are detailed in Policy 33 including making efficient use of land whilst respecting the constraints that exist, avoiding unacceptable harm to the amenity of nearby properties, and ensuring that the scale, massing and appearance of the development is of a high standard of design and layout and where relevant relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site. Paragraph 56 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment; good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.
 4. The West Chiltington Common area is one of informal roads, often little more than narrow tracks, many also public footpaths and bridleways, with an eclectic
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but generally attractive range of dwelling designs, orientation and location on their plots. There is hardly a discernible building line on this part of Spinney Lane but notwithstanding the often narrow tracks and large buildings, the mature vegetation and openness around buildings lends a spacious character and appearance to the area.

5. The appeal property has apparently been extended previously and the planning history provides the detail. Of particular note is WC/87/02 for a double garage with accommodation over which extends towards the road, and would itself be further extended under the appeal proposals. The Committee Report refers to changes to the design of the previous projection to make it acceptable.
6. The projection now proposed would be subservient in width and hence roof height compared with the previous projection from which it would extend, whilst making use of the same eaves height and a room in the roof. A further pitched-roof dormer would be incorporated to the courtyard side in the style of others on the property, and the outside end would be a hip roof with small gablet at the ridge, again a feature found elsewhere on the public face of the property. Of itself the design and arrangement of the extension would be in keeping with the architectural treatment of this large dwelling and taking account of the already varied roof-scape and footprint, would not unbalance or otherwise disrupt the design of the building itself.
7. The main considerations remaining are the effects of this otherwise acceptable addition due to the location on the plot relative to the road and the neighbouring dwelling.

Character and Appearance

8. As stated, there is no discernible building line and the wide variety of building forms, materials and location on the plot adds interest to the area. There are examples of significantly extended buildings, and in the vicinity of the appeal site there was work proceeding to the dwelling south of *Chestnuts* of a large detached garage with rooms in the roof significantly forward of that dwelling's building line. To the north, *Pansala* has parts of the building very close to the track and opposite *Espinette* has a lengthy planning history with works progressing.
9. However, the location of the proposed extension on the inside of a bend in the track would result in the extension and particularly its extent of projection towards the road appearing over-dominant in views, emphasised by the narrow width of the track. This impression would not be sufficient compensated-for by the location of *Espinette* on its plot. Neither would the otherwise acceptable stepping-down and narrowing of the width overcome the appearance of the enlarged building impinging into the open space around the track. The garage south of *Chestnuts* has the advantage of being detached and retaining some space to the dwelling, avoiding the impression of unrelieved built form.
10. In conclusion on this issue, the extension would be too close to the road having a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area, and would not accord with the aims of Policy 33 as the proposal would relate unsympathetically to the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes adjoining the site. The aims of paragraph 56 of the Framework on good design would not be met due to the adverse effects just described.

Living Conditions

11. Agreement had been given to enter the adjoining front and side garden areas of *Burden* whilst the occupiers were away, and this offer was taken-up following the visit to the appeal site. That dwelling is sited so that the south facing side wall is at an angle to the mutual boundary and hence the proposed extension, with the gap increasing towards the road. The Oak tree at the greatest separation would provide some filtering of views, but the flank elevation of the extension would still be prominent in the outlook from side windows. Whilst the area of garden to the south of the dwelling is presently used as a vegetable plot and for clothes drying, the more private garden area beyond an enclosure, which was not visited, appears small compared with others in the area.
12. There appear to be two rooms on the ground floor on this elevation, both of which could be seen to have another window providing light either east or west, but the south facing windows could be adversely affected, particularly with a low sun in winter. There are rooflights along the southern slope, but these are further again from the site of the proposed extension, and at a higher level.
13. Taking account of the size of the adjoining plot at *Burden*, the lighting arrangement of the rooms and the distances involved, the changes that the development would bring about are judged to not result in *unacceptable* harm to the amenity of this nearby property, the terms used in Policy 33. However, the outlook from the plot and the windows would experience at close quarters and on a day-to-day basis, the failings identified in the first main issue regarding the effect on the character and appearance of the area, which adds weight to the conclusions which follow.

Conclusions

14. The further extension of the property would harm the character and appearance of the area and would not accord with Development Plan policies and national guidance on good design in relation to the surroundings. For the reasons given above it is concluded that the appeal should be dismissed.

S J Papworth

INSPECTOR