
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 September 2016

by Lesley Coffey BA Hons BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 22 September 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/D3830/D/16/3151705

Dunswood, Copthorne Road, Crawley RH10 3PD

- 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 M Power against the decision of Mid Sussex District Council.
 - The application Ref DM/16/0048, dated 6 January 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 April 2016.
 - The development proposed is first floor extension over existing bungalow and new front porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for first floor extension over existing bungalow and new front porch at Dunswood, Copthorne Road, Crawley RH10 3PD in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DM/16/0048 , dated 6 January 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) No development shall commence until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
 - 3) Notwithstanding the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, or as amended in the future, no windows or other openings shall be formed in the eastern wall of the extension without the prior specific grant of planning permission by the Local Planning Authority.
 - 4) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 5916, 5945 Rev A, and 5954 Rev B.

Procedural Matter

2. It is suggested by a neighbour that the boundary between the appeal property and Oaklands Cottage is incorrectly shown on the submitted plans. Plan number 5945 rev A shows the boundary to be aligned with the flank elevation of the existing dwelling, but the fence between the two properties to be offset. The neighbour is also concerned that the roof of the existing dwelling currently overhangs the boundary wall and does not wish this part of the dwelling to be

extended further. This matter was brought to the attention of the Council prior to the determination of the application.

3. The submitted plans are annotated to show both the line of the existing fence and the appellant's view as to the boundary of the site. With the exception of the site plan, the other plans all clearly show the line of the existing fence in addition to the boundary. The line of the fence would seem to reflect what I observed at the time of my site visit. The precise location of the boundary is a private matter between the parties and is outside of my jurisdiction, and since the appeal relates to a first floor extension, it is not material to my decision.
4. The proposed extension would not project beyond the line of the existing fence, and is set back slightly from the ground floor elevation of the property which adjoins the neighbouring dwelling. Therefore it would be unlikely to overhang the boundary wall between the properties. Notwithstanding this, the precise location of the boundary is a private matter between the parties.
5. Drawing number 5954 Rev B indicates that the overall floor to eaves height of the extended property would be 2.466 metres. This is evidently incorrect since it is two storeys in height, nevertheless it is clear from the submitted plans and the representations from the parties, that the extended dwelling would be two storeys high. I am therefore satisfied that no-one would be prejudiced by this error and I have considered the appeal accordingly.

Main Issues

6. I consider the main issues to be the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and living conditions of the occupants of Oaklands Cottage with particular regard to light and visual prominence.

Reasons

7. Copthorne Road is a busy classified road that links Copthorne to Crawley. The north side, where the appeal site is located, is characterised by predominantly residential development mostly comprising detached dwellings set in large plots. The dwellings are arranged in an informal pattern and most are set back from the road and screened by trees and other vegetation. Due to the screening provided by the trees and vegetation, the existing dwellings in the vicinity are not particularly noticeable in views from the public realm and therefore there is no readily recognisable architectural character or consistent scale. The opposite side of the road is predominantly woodland.
8. The appeal property occupies a narrow plot and the dwelling is set back from the road by a distance of about 21 metres. It was originally part of a pair of semi-detached bungalows, but the adjoining bungalow was demolished and replaced by a larger detached dwelling, Oaklands Cottage.
9. The proposal would provide an additional floor of accommodation over the front part of the existing bungalow. I understand that the scheme was amended during the course of the application and the height and bulk of the proposed roof was reduced. The proposed hipped roof would be set back from the existing flank wall with Oaklands Cottage, the neighbouring dwelling. It is proposed that the extension would be finished with oak finish weatherboarding.
10. Policy B1 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan (2004) seeks a high quality of design in all proposals, whilst policy H13 requires extensions to be appropriate to the

scale of the existing dwelling, the setting of the existing building and not obtrusive in the landscape.

11. The existing dwelling is of a simple style, and has been previously extended both to the rear and the front. Although it is unobtrusive, due to the previous extensions and the loss of the adjoining dwelling, it has limited architectural merit. The single storey extension to the rear would remain, whilst the flat roofed extension to the front would be replaced by the proposed extension. I therefore consider that although the proposal would significantly alter the appearance of the dwelling it would provide a more coherent and cohesive appearance.
12. Given the verdant nature of the surrounding area, I consider the proposed weather-boarding to be appropriate to the setting and appearance of the dwelling. Due to the distance of the existing dwelling from the road and the narrow entrance, views of the proposed extension would be limited to a very short distance opposite the appeal property and would not harm the character of the area.
13. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not harm the character or appearance of the surrounding area and would comply with policies B1 and H13 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan (2004).
14. Although the proposed extension will be visible from Oaklands Cottage, there will be no windows facing towards that property and therefore the proposal would not give rise to any loss of privacy. Whilst the extension would have some effect in terms of diminution of daylight and sunlight this would be very limited and is insufficient to warrant dismissal of the appeal. The neighbour is also concerned that the proposal could adversely affect air circulation around the dwelling. However, given the extent of the separation between the two properties and space around the dwellings there is no reason to suppose that this would be the case. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not significantly harm the living conditions of the occupants of Oaklands Cottage and would comply with policy B3 which seeks to safeguard the amenity of nearby residents.

Conditions

15. I have considered the suggested conditions in the light of the advice at paragraphs 203 and 206 of the NPPF and the PPG.
16. In the interest of visual amenity I agree that details of the materials to be used in the external finish of the extension should be submitted for approval. In order to safeguard the privacy of the occupants of Oaklands Cottage no windows should be installed in the eastern elevation of the extension. I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawings as this provides certainty.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Lesley Coffey

INSPECTOR