
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 November 2016

by Simon Warder MA BSc(Hons) DipUD(Dist) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 28 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/C1435/D/16/3156219

Little Friars Farm, Otham Court Lane, Polegate, East Sussex BN26 6QT

- 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 Baldry against the decision of Wealden District Council.
 - The application Ref WD/2015/2196/F, dated 30 September 2015, was refused by notice dated 19 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is a two storey extension at rear and single storey extension at side and front.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached two storey dwelling which, notwithstanding a nearby group of small storage buildings, occupies a fairly isolated countryside location. Roadside vegetation and planting within the site limit long and medium range views of the dwelling. However, it is prominent in short range views along Otham Court Lane, from where the front and both sides of the building are clearly visible. The building's modest scale, simple hipped roof built form and locally distinctive red brick and tile materials ensure that it sits comfortably with the agricultural landscape setting of the Low Weald.
 4. The proposed two storey extension would wrap around the rear and part of one side of the existing building. A single storey conservatory would be positioned in front of the side extension with a chamfered bay projecting beyond the new side wall. Consequently, the proposal would significantly increase the depth and width of the existing building and it would not be subservient in scale.
 5. The new rear elevation would feature three gable ended roofs and a first floor balcony. The first floor of the extension would be finished with exposed timber frames and rendered panels and there would be extensive glazing in the walls and roof of the conservatory. These design features would not be in keeping with the appearance of the existing building. Nor is there anything to suggest that they are characteristic of other buildings locally. Moreover, the massing of the extensions would add to the complexity of the built form the building.
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6. As result, the extended building would be considerably more bulky and assertive. It would no longer have the modest scale and simple built form which allows the existing building to integrate into its rural landscape setting. These effects would be heightened by the use of incongruous materials and design details and would be evident in views from Otham Court Road.
7. Consequently, I find that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area. It would, therefore, conflict with Policies GD2, DC19, EN1, EN8 and EN27 of the Wealden Local Plan 1998 and Policies SPO1 and WCS14 of the Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan 2013. Together, these policies seek to carefully control development in the Low Weald and to conserve the agricultural landscape. They also require extensions to dwellings not to be intrusive in their rural setting and to be of an appropriate size which does not dominate or adversely change the character of the existing building.
8. Nor would the proposal accord with the Wealden Design Guide Supplementary Planning Guidance 2008 or the National Planning Policy Framework to the extent that they have similar aims.
9. The appellant has drawn my attention to extended dwellings at Otham Court, Martletts and Sayerlands House. However, whilst these properties do appear to be larger, none are as prominent in public views as the appeal property. Furthermore, I have not been provided with the details of the extensions to the properties or the circumstances leading to any planning decisions. Therefore, I can give the examples cited limited weight.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons set out above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Simon Warder

INSPECTOR