

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 January 2017

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 9 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C1760/D/16/3162120

The Brewhouse, Salisbury Road, Sherfield English, Romsey, SO51 6FL.

- 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 Christopher Jones against the decision of Test Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01521/FULLS dated 21 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 25 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is retention of 3 dormer windows to west end of existing annexe. Constructed in variance to approved drawings for 15/01325/FULLS and 15/03098/VARS.
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Preliminary matter

1. Planning permission was granted for the conversion of the existing building for ancillary residential accommodation in 2015. However the conversion was not implemented in accordance with the approved plans and so the implemented scheme does not benefit from planning permission. The Appeal application seeks to address the changes made to the approved scheme, which includes the insertion of three dormer windows in place of the approved three roof-lights.
2. Accordingly, in the interests of clarity, I propose to describe the proposed development as *"to demolish outbuilding and erection of detached building to provide ancillary residential accommodation comprising of two bedrooms with en-suites, living area and kitchen, utility/WC, store with en-suite, garage and carport (Amended scheme to retain three dormer windows)."* This description is broadly consistent with that used by the Council.

Decision

3. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted to demolish outbuilding and erection of detached building to provide ancillary residential accommodation comprising of two bedrooms with en-suites, living area and kitchen, utility/WC, store with en-suite, garage and carport (Amended scheme to retain three dormer windows) at The Brewhouse, Salisbury Road, Sherfield English, Romsey, SO51 6FL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/01521/FULLS dated 21 June 2016, subject to the following conditions:
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- 1) The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbered: 013:071:02, 013:071:50 and 013:071:04 Rev G.
- 2) The building shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwelling known as "The Brewhouse" on the approved plans.
- 3) Within six months of the date of this decision a schedule of landscape implementation and maintenance for a minimum of five years shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The schedule shall include details of the heights of the proposed trees; the heights and density of the proposed climbing plants; the arrangements and timing for the implementation of the soft landscaping scheme and ongoing maintenance arrangements for at least five years. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved schedule.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the scheme on the character and appearance of the landscape.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The Appeal site is located within a cluster of dwellings within the dispersed rural settlement of Sherfield English. Whilst the age, form, design and appearance of the dwellings within the settlement vary, typically they benefit from spacious mature landscaped plots which either adjoin or are in close proximity to the open countryside. The wide grass verges and the abundance of boundary hedges and trees soften the appearance and partially screen the dwellings. This reinforces the rural character and appearance of the settlement.
6. The Appeal site is consistent with this character. It comprises a large mature landscaped plot which is enclosed by hedges and trees, which partially screen the host dwelling from public views.
7. Together and amongst other things the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and policy COM11 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2011 – 2019) (Local Plan) seek to ensure that new development adds to the quality of the area and reflects the identity of local surroundings. The size and design of additions to domestic buildings should be in keeping with the existing building and should not be more visually intrusive in the landscape.
8. As stated above planning permission has already been granted for a residential annexe and the only difference between the approved scheme and the current Appeal scheme that has been drawn to my attention is the insertion of three dormer windows in place of three roof-lights.
9. The proposed building is long and narrow, following the form of a traditional farm building and is constructed from traditional rural materials. The building is modest in height with a slate roof and a broken ridge line which breaks up its perceived mass and width. The building is set back from the front boundary of

the site by some 30 metres and is largely screened from the highway. The only place where parts of the building are clearly visible is from the entrance to the property, which is flanked by tall hedges. As such any views of the building are fleeting and restricted to parts of the building only. The building is almost fully screened from the adjacent bus stops and is not readily apparent in views from passing cars.

10. The broken ridge and eaves lines of the building result in the building having two distinct parts. The proposed dormer windows at the western end of the building are smaller than those on the eastern half. This together with the reduced ridge height ensures that the western half of the building remains subordinate to the eastern half. At the same time the eastern half of the building relates more closely to the existing dwelling and developed part of the site.
11. The proposed additional tree and other soft planting would provide additional screening. It would soften the appearance and break up the mass and width of the building as a whole when viewed from the entrance. This is in addition to reinforcing the verdant rural character of the site, its setting and the surrounding area.
12. As a result of these factors the proposal would respect and compliment the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings. It would be consistent with the Sherfield English Village Design Statement 2015, which states that new development should be complementary to its surroundings. Where a domestic addition will be clearly visible from outside its curtilage, it should harmonise with a view which will be dominated by trees and fields.
13. The Council has suggested the imposition of conditions relating to the use of the existing building and landscaping. If the building were to be used as a separate dwelling it could result in the sub-division of the plot and additional hard surfaces and ancillary buildings, which could have a detrimental impact on the landscape character. The proposed landscaping is necessary to soften and break up the overall mass of the building.
14. Accordingly, both conditions are necessary in the interests of clarity and to ensure the development respects the landscape character of the area. I have however amended the suggested wording of the landscape condition to reflect the fact that the building has already been constructed.
15. The Council has also suggested a condition which requires the development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted plans. This condition is necessary in the interests of clarity. This is because the internal layout and rear/side elevations of the building as currently constructed were not viewed during the Appeal site visit. As such I cannot be certain that the existing building accords fully with the submitted plans.
16. I conclude that the proposal respects the character and appearance of the landscape and therefore complies with policy COM11 of the Local Plan, the NPPF and the Sherfield English Village Design Statement.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR