

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 June 2017

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 19th June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Y9507/D/17/3168333
45 Heath Road East, Petersfield, GU31 4HN

- 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 Paul Kelly against the decision of South Downs National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref SDNP/16/04900/HOUS, dated 1 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 9 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a two-storey side and rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. Since the date of their decision, the Authority has confirmed that they are now satisfied that the development would not have an ecological impact on legally-protected species as the extension would not need to disturb the existing roof materials or void. I have no reason to disagree.
3. The main issues therefore are the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and wider area, and upon the living conditions at 51 Torberry Drive with particular regard to visual impact and privacy.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached two-storey dwelling with a return boundary to Torberry Drive, a residential cul-de-sac which at this point has dwellings positioned along only its north side in the form of two-short terraced rows. These are set back behind fairly shallow front gardens, many used for frontage parking, with the dwellings' forward building lines all sharing a common alignment that is respected by the existing recessed position of the flank wall to the appeal property.
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5. The proposal is to extend the property sideways, projecting it with a two-storey addition towards Torberry Drive by around 4.7m and which would extend beyond the rear elevation of the existing dwelling by around 3m.
6. Whilst the extension would be slightly recessed behind the existing front elevation, and stepped marginally below the existing ridge line, it would be openly seen as an obvious and fairly bulky addition to the original that would lack any reasonable degree of subservience. Its width would measure over half the width of the existing property. In my assessment this would appear disproportionate. In addition, its rear facing gable would appear as a dominant feature in the vista looking west along Torberry Drive, and one that would be visually awkward in relation to the profile of the existing building with its side eaves tucking-in just under the existing eaves line of No 45 and overlapping a short distance across the property's rear elevation.
7. The failure of the extension to successfully assimilate itself with the existing property would be further highlighted by its exposed position significantly forward of the established building line to this side of Torberry Drive where it would stand out as intrusive and harmful addition to the street scene.
8. I appreciate that there is no particular architectural style to properties locally that is important. I also recognise that many nearby properties have been extended in a variety of ways. However, my attention has not been drawn to any examples in particular and I am not aware of any that directly compare with the proposal that is before me either in terms of scale, form or location. In any event, I have considered the appeal on its own merits and overall, for the reasons given, I find that the proposal would fail to display the high quality of design that is required by Policy HE2 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Second Review, which deals specifically with alterations and extensions to dwellings. In this regard it would also conflict with the aims and objectives of Policy CP29 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy (JCS), which was adopted in 2014, and Built Environment Policy 1 of the Petersfield Neighbourhood Development Plan adopted in 2015.

Living Conditions

9. The new rear gable would include a first floor bedroom window that would look directly towards 51 Torberry Drive. However, this outlook would only be towards its shallow front garden and drive, which is open plan and already exposed to full view from the public domain. Given also that the window would be set away from the side boundary with No 51 by around 7m, with a double width parking area proposed at No 45 in the intervening space, I am satisfied that there would be no intrusion that would significantly reduce levels of privacy at No 51. For the same reason I am also satisfied that the extension would only be seen in very oblique views from the nearest first floor front facing window at No 51 and would therefore not appear overly intrusive. In this regard I find no conflict with Policies CP27 and CP29 of the JCS as they seek to safeguard the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring properties, or with the National Planning Policy Framework where it deals with such matters.

Conclusion

10. Despite my findings in relation to the impact upon the living conditions at 51 Torberry Drive, I find that the proposal would be harmful to the character and

appearance of 45 Heath Road East and the wider area. I can understand the appellant's frustration after receiving a reasonably positive response from the Authority to a pre-application submission, but this does not alter my conclusion overall that the appeal should be dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR