
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 August 2017

by David Cliff BA Hons MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 18th August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Y9507/D/17/3177644

Lindalls, Church Street, Amberley BN18 9ND

- 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 Leigh Cresswell against the decision of South Downs National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref SDNP/17/00321/HOUS, dated 23 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 20 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing single storey extensions and the construction of additional accommodation to provide increased living accommodation and a studio.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the demolition of existing single storey extensions and the construction of additional accommodation to provide increased living accommodation and a studio in accordance with the terms of the application Ref. SDNP/17/00321/HOUS, dated 23 January 2017, subject to the following conditions:
 1. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings: 16.2087.01, 16.2087.02, 16.2087.06 and 16.2087.07.
 3. The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in the materials shown on drawing no. 16.2087.06.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the size and appearance of the existing dwellinghouse and the rural landscape character of the area.

Reasons

3. Policy DC9 of the Horsham District General Development Control Policies 2007 ('the GDCP') seeks to ensure that development is of a high standard of design. The supporting text to this policy elaborates upon this stating that development should relate sympathetically to its built surroundings and that this includes extensions which should not overpower the original building.

4. Policy DC28 of the GDCP relates specifically to house extensions outside of the defined built-up areas. It requires that extensions should be in sympathy with and subservient to the scale and character of the existing dwelling. The supporting text to this policy explains that it seeks to control the impact of such development on the rural character of the District. Although not specifically stated in its reason for refusal, the Council's Officer report says that the proposal would not complement the existing rural landscape character of the area.
5. The existing dwelling is a modestly sized single storey building with a low roof profile. As such it is not a prominent building and does not impact significantly upon the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape. The proposed two storey extension, to be linked to the existing, would represent a substantial increase in the footprint and massing of the dwelling. The design would be different to more conventional extensions as it seeks to retain the form of the existing dwellinghouse whilst providing a further two storey accommodation via a single storey link.
6. Given its size and massing, the proposal cannot be considered to be subservient to the scale and character of the existing dwelling and in this respect would be technically contrary to policy DC28 of the GDCP. It would, however, be a good standard of design. Whilst of two storeys and higher than the existing dwelling, its height has been limited to reduce its impact upon the surrounding landscape. Utilising horizontal weatherboard cladding and a profiled metal roof, the extension, notwithstanding the increase in size, would follow a similar design approach to the existing.
7. The proposed development would benefit from the existing screening which would limit its visual impact on the surrounding area. Furthermore, the height and massing of the resulting dwellinghouse would still appear as relatively modest. The resulting development would not dominate or appear as cramped within its curtilage and would not be of such height or massing to appear as incongruous within the surrounding landscape. Its overall visual impact on the surrounding rural landscape would not be significant.
8. I have also considered the location of the dwellinghouse close to the edge of the built up area of the village and the existence of other development in proximity of the site. Whilst the openness of the area in the vicinity of the site contributes to the rural setting of the village, the presence of other development also contributes to the general character and appearance. I do not consider that the proposed development would be harmful to this.
9. Whilst the supporting text to policy DC9 states that extensions should not overpower the existing building, the aim of the policy is to generally seek a high standard of design and respect the rural character of the surrounding area. For the reasons set out above, I consider that the design of the proposal would satisfactorily achieve these aims as set out in the main text of the policy.
10. I acknowledge the needs of the existing occupiers of the dwellinghouse along with the condition of the house itself. Such needs carry moderate weight although I acknowledge that to some degree it is possible that the existing house could be modernised and extended to a lesser extent than proposed.
11. I have also considered the proposal against the general design aims of policy CP3 of the Horsham District Core Strategy 2007 ('the Core Strategy'). The

proposal would satisfy the tests in this policy seeking a high quality and inclusive design. I am also satisfied that the proposed development would accord with the aim in paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework to conserve the landscape and scenic beauty of the South Downs National Park.

12. Whilst the proposal cannot be considered to be subservient in scale to the existing dwelling, I consider that the development would be of a high standard of design that would complement the existing house and provide upgraded accommodation for the occupiers. I have carefully considered the aims of the relevant development plan policies which seek amongst other things to ensure a high standard of design and to preserve the rural character and appearance of the area. I consider that the proposal has been carefully designed in order to meet such aims.
13. Therefore, whilst there is a technical breach of the policy in respect of the size of the extension in relation to the existing dwellinghouse, in this case for the reasons outlined above, I consider that the harm arising from this proposal would be minimal. There would therefore be no significant harm in the context of the design and landscape protection aims of policies CP3 of the Core Strategy, policies DC9 and DC28 of the GDCP and the National Planning Policy Framework.
14. For the above reasons, and having regard to all other matters, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.
15. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawings as this provides certainty. A condition requiring the use of the materials as specified on the approved drawings is necessary in order to safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

David Cliff

INSPECTOR