
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 September 2017

by Grahame Gould BA MPhil MRTPI

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

Decision date: 4th October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/U1430/D/17/3179948

1 Whydown Cottages, Whydown Road, Bexhill TN39 4RD

- 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 and Mrs Davey against the decision of Rother District Council.
 - The application Ref RR/2017/765/P, dated 20 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 15 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is two storey side and rear extensions, extension of front porch plus other alterations.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of 1 Whydown Cottages (No 1) and the area.

Reasons

3. The development would involve the construction of a two storey side extension, a part single and part two storey rear extension and a replacement front porch. No 1 has been extended to the side, with permission for a two storey addition having been granted in the 1980s. No 1 is one of six semi-detached houses, Nos 1 to 6, that comprise a short ribbon of built development in the countryside. Of Nos 1 to 6, only No 3 does not have a two storey side addition. Nos 1 to 6 have variously been extended to the rear.
4. As originally built No 1, like its neighbours, was a small cottage and its side extension was therefore a significant enlargement. The proposed side extension would amount to a further significant lateral extension of No 1 and it in combination with the existing addition would more than double Nos 1's original width. I consider that the resulting widening of No 1 would amount to a disproportionate lateral enlargement of this property.
5. Elements of the side extension have been included in its design with the purpose of seeking to give it a subservient appearance, ie the setting back of its front elevation and its lowered ridge line. However, I consider that those design elements would do little to disguise the fact that it would be very obvious that No 1 would have been subject to extensive lateral enlargement.

6. I therefore consider that the resulting front elevation would have an uncharacteristically bulky appearance in the streetscene, with No 1 clearly being seen as having been extensively laterally extended when compared with Nos 2 to 6. I am not persuaded that because No 1 has already been extended in an 'unsympathetic' manner, as recognised by the appellants, that that provides a justification for the proposed side extension.
7. While the rear extension would be of an acceptable depth, I consider the double pitched hipped roof above the two storey element, in combination with the proposed side extension's hipped roof, would have a contrived appearance. The resulting rear roofscape would not be in keeping with the simplicity of No 1's existing roof form and is indicative of the new extensions being excessive in scale for No 1.
8. The existing and proposed extensions would transform No 1 from being a modest rural cottage, when it was first built, into a much larger house. I consider that the scale of the resulting house would be inappropriate in a rural location such as this, where dwellings are characterised by being of more modest proportions.
9. Nos 1 to 6 have variously been extended and other properties in the adjoining Sandhurst Lane have also been extended. However, each case must be considered on its individual merits and, for the reasons given above, I have found that the extensions in combination would be harmful to character and appearance of No 1 and the area. I therefore consider that the extensions that have been built elsewhere do not justify the appeal development being granted planning permission.
10. For the reasons given above I conclude that the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of No 1 and the area. The development would therefore be in conflict with saved Policy HG8 of the Rother District Local Plan of 2006 and Policies OSS4 and EN3 of the Rother Local Plan Core Strategy of 2014 because it would neither be in keeping with the existing dwelling and its surroundings, in terms of its size and design, nor would it be of the highest quality.

Other Matter

11. I am sympathetic to the appellants' wish to provide a home that meets the needs of their family. However, I consider that meeting that need does not outweigh the harm that I have identified above.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above the appeal is dismissed.

Grahame Gould

INSPECTOR