

# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 November 2017

**by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI**

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

**Decision date: 14 November 2017**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/Z3825/D/17/3180196**

**South Lodge, Knepp Castle, West Grinstead, Horsham RH13 8LJ**

- 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 Sir Charles Burrell against the decision of Horsham District Council.
  - The application, Ref. DC/17/0506, dated 2 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 3 May 2017.
  - The development proposed is a two-storey side extension; Rear conservatory addition.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two-storey side extension; Rear conservatory addition at South Lodge, Knepp Castle, West Grinstead, Horsham in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. DC/17/0506, dated 2 March 2017, subject to the following conditions:
  - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision;
  - 2) The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing Series: D 0217/316/: Plan Nos. 01-09 inclusive;
  - 3) No development shall commence until details / samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extensions hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details / samples.

## Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area having regard to the designated heritage status of the estate's parkland.

## Reasons

3. I saw on my visit that the appeal property is a Victorian lodge house located discreetly in the countryside of the Knepp Castle Estate and with a backdrop of mature woodland. As a building that has remained unaltered since its construction and continues to provide living accommodation for an estate worker, South Lodge has a distinctive character and appearance - not diminished by the fact that its location is within the estate rather than in the
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more usual position at one of its formal gateway entrances, or that there are many similar buildings on other landed estates throughout the countryside.

4. There is however an inherent dilemma in the application of the principles of sustainable development set out in Government policy in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 ('the Framework') to such buildings. On the one hand their pleasing character and appearance is a product of their relatively modest scale and distinctive architectural style. On the other hand they are often too small and have an internal layout and room sizes not conducive to family accommodation of a modern day standard.
5. In my view, in the case of South Lodge these opposing factors effectively preclude extensions that the Council would consider are of a clearly subservient scale and closely matching design detail: firstly because they would not provide the type and scale of the accommodation needed for the building to play a positive role in support of the future management of the Knepp Castle Estate, and secondly because rather than being convincing, a pastiche addition would have the potential to harmfully dilute the distinctive character and appearance of the original lodge.
6. Taking the second of these points first, I consider that this premise supports a design concept of additions that are read clearly as extensions of a different appearance but nonetheless with an element of subordination and reflecting (but for the most part not replicating) features of the original building. Returning to the first point, I attach substantial weight to the fact that the intended occupier of the building is the manager of the Knepp Castle Estate; has lived in the building for about a dozen years, but now urgently requires improvements to the accommodation in order to meet the needs of his family.
7. By positioning the main extension as an addition to the south west flank, the appeal scheme has the considerable advantage of leaving the existing building clearly recognisable as the original lodge, including when seen from the public footpath where it coincides with the estate road. The front and north eastern elevations would remain undisturbed and the addition of the conservatory at the rear would not obscure the main features of the north west elevation. The grounds of appeal explain that since 2011 a range of alternative schemes have been considered and all have their pros and cons. The current scheme has evolved from these and, although not a perfect solution, neither would be any of the alternatives.
8. In short, this is a proposal that would benefit the future care and maintenance of the Estate and this, together with the design of its extended form, would maintain the significance of the Knepp Castle parkland as a designated heritage asset. I consider that in the light of these factors, and in particular because the proposal would still enable the character and appearance of the existing lodge to be identified, there would be no harmful conflict with Policies 28, 33 & 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework 2015. The scheme would also accord with the principles of sustainability and design in the Framework. I shall therefore allow the appeal.
9. As regards the issue of roof treatment I consider that this can be left to negotiations between the appellant and the Council, albeit in my view the practicality of sourcing materials and the views of the Sussex Gardens Trust

might reasonably carry some weight. For the purposes of this Decision a condition in respect of the submission of details of materials for the Council's approval will cover the matter. A condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans is needed for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

*Martin Andrews*

INSPECTOR