



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 November 2017

by Mr Kim Bennett DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 20 December 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Y9507/D/17/3181742

Chapel Barn, Lewes Road, Piddinghoe, East Sussex BN9 9AL

- 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 Stephan Pfeiffer against the decision of South Downs National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref SDNP/17/00831/HOUS, dated 15 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 22 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a new single storey car port and garage with store and workshop facility (revised proposals to previous approvals SDNP/15/02432/HOUS & SDNP/16/02756/HOUS).
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a new single storey car port and garage with store and workshop facility (revised proposals to previous approvals SDNP/15/02432/HOUS & SDNP/16/02756/HOUS) at Chapel Barn, Lewes Road, Piddinghoe, East Sussex BN9 9AL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref SDNP/17/00831/HOUS, dated 15 February 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 plans: 298_P_01; 298_P_02; 298_P_12 and 298_P_23.
 - 3) Before commencement of any works above ground level, details of all external materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
 - 4) No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority. A written record of any archaeological works undertaken shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within 3 months of the completion of any archaeological investigation unless an alternative timescale is first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

- 5) The proposed building hereby permitted shall not be used at any time other than as a car port/garage, private workshop and storage incidental to the use of the main dwelling at Chapel Barn.

Procedural Matter

2. There appears to be some confusion about the site address. Although both the application form and the decision notice refer to Deans Farm, that property appears to be located to the west of Chapel Barn. The Grounds of Appeal refers to this discrepancy and also notes that previous decision notices for the site referred to the address being Chapel Barn. For the avoidance of doubt I have therefore also referred to the site address as Chapel Barn in relation to the property clearly marked as such on the site location plan 298_P_01.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and surrounding countryside.

Reasons

4. Chapel Barn comprises an extended form of buildings located to the west of Lewes Road and approached via a track from that road. The accommodation, which appears to be used for a mixture of residential and business purposes, includes a converted barn of some age and beyond that to the south an extensive two storey link arranged in a right angle form and of more contemporary design. The appeal site lies immediately to the south of this and comprises a former walled pig pen bounded by a flint wall to its frontage. There is rising land to the south and west of the site.
5. A bridleway runs along the access track in front of the site and to the east of that there is open countryside.
6. Two previous permissions have been granted for garaging accommodation in 2015 and 2016 as referred to in the description of development above. The current proposal differs from the 2016 permission in that it is now proposed to have a mezzanine storage area over part of the first floor which would necessitate a different roof form than that which was previously approved.
7. The Authority considers that the revised roof form is not sympathetic to the existing dwelling and would be prominent in the landscape setting. However, the footprint of the building would be the same as approved in the 2016 permission, and there would be no overall increase in height. The only significant difference would be the filling in of the space between the previously approved two gable ends by the formation of a flat roof element surrounded by partial hipped roofs on three sides.
8. The changes would not be apparent from the west or south where there is rising ground immediately to the rear of the site. Although there may be glimpsed views of part of the flat roof from Deans Cottages to the west, it would be at some distance, and the fact that a sedum roof is proposed would help it to integrate with the surrounding landscape. I also note that the 2015 permission included a flat roof section on its southern side. Approaching from the north, the impact would be very similar to the 2016 permission, the only

discernible difference being a gable end set against the bank to the rear rather than a half hipped roof.

9. Whilst the change to the east elevation would be different it would still have the appearance of an agricultural building appropriate to its setting, with a traditional design, clay tiled roof and weatherboarded walls set behind the existing flint wall which is to be retained. The flat roof section would not be visible being well above eye height. In overall terms therefore, I do not consider there would be any significantly greater impact than the previously approved scheme and that the design would still be sympathetic to its setting and also the existing building, which as noted above includes a substantial section of contemporary newly built accommodation in any case.
10. Although the Authority notes that the building would be prominent in the surrounding landscape and from public vantage points, that was also the case in respect of consideration of both the 2015 and 2016 permissions, and I do not consider the current proposal would make the building significantly more prominent in the wider countryside setting.
11. I note that the Authority considers that the building would be tantamount to a small dwelling and that even imposing a condition restricting its use could be easily removed. However, as noted above, there would be no increase in the size of the footprint from what has already been approved so that the only difference in accommodation would be a relatively small area of mezzanine space compared to the ground floor. The appellant has confirmed there is no intention to lay out the accommodation with bedroom or kitchen facilities as might be expected in a residential annexe, and that the ground floor would remain for the parking of cars with the first floor for storage purposes. There is no evidence before me to suggest otherwise and I note that the appellant is also prepared to accept a condition restricting the use to that applied for. Any subsequent proposal to vary or delete such a condition would be a matter for the Authority to consider at that time, based upon any change in circumstances and planning issues that it might raise.
12. For the above reasons there would be no conflict with Saved Policy RES18 of the Lewes District Local Plan 2003, or Policies CP10 or CP11 of the Joint Core Strategy 2016, in that the siting and design would respond sympathetically to the site and local context, it would not dominate the existing dwelling and the landscape qualities of the South Downs National Park would be conserved.
13. Conditions requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and for details of materials, are necessary in the interests of certainty and visual amenity. A condition restricting the use of the building is necessary having regard to wider policy restricting new development within the countryside. Finally, although not suggested by the Authority in connection with this proposal, I note that both previous permissions contained an archaeological condition at the request of the County Archaeologist. Since there is no evidence before me that on site conditions have changed since then, I am imposing a similar condition to ensure any archaeological remains can be safeguarded.
14. Accordingly, the appeal is allowed and planning permission granted.

Kim Bennett INSPECTOR