



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: 22 December 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Y9507/D/17/3180896

39 Tilmore Road, Petersfield GU32 2HJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant [outline] planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Ian Pruden against the decision of South Downs National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref SDNP/17/01650/HOUS, dated 28 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 5 July 2017.
 - The development is the retention of a dormer roof extension and pitched roof to replace partially flat roof
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider area.

Reasons

3. Number 39 Tilmore Road is a semi-detached property located on the eastern side of the road. It forms part of the southernmost of three pairs of similarly designed properties on this side of the road, the heights of which gradually rise towards the north because of the topography.
4. The property has already been significantly extended by a porch at the front, a slight raising of the roof, a two storey rear extension and a further single storey rear extension beyond that. In addition, a staggered rear dormer has also been constructed, part of which sits above the two storey rear extension, and part above the original roof. The proposal seeks to retain the dormer extension as well as a pitched roof over the single storey rear extension.
5. The appellant considers that the Authority is being overly prescriptive in its design requirements bearing in mind that the property was a former Council owned property and it would be challenging to achieve an exemplary standard of design as required by Policy. Furthermore, the development is not visible from the street frontage and there is therefore no wider impact from public vantage points.
6. However, when viewed from the rear, the dormer extension dominates the rear of the property with the larger part effectively appearing as a three storey

projection as it sits above the greater part of the two storey rear extension. The total width of the combined dormer is nearly 9 metres across which subsumes almost the entire rear part of the original roof and gives a top heavy appearance to the property. This is accentuated by the full length height of both rear facing windows which are significantly larger in scale than other window openings above ground floor level. When taken together with the other significant extensions to the property, I agree with the Council that the combined impact has resulted in an incongruous addition which has harmed the character of the dwelling.

7. I acknowledge that the development is not prominent from the street scene, but it is very apparent from neighbouring properties where it appears out of scale with those properties, particularly in conjunction with the other extensions. It is also visible from the access road to the south of the property, which provides access to residential properties to the east and rear access to other residential properties in Tilmore Road to the south. The fact that there is not wider harm does not diminish the harm caused from those viewpoints in my view, particularly where the extent of harm is as significant as in this case.
8. I note the appellant's point with regard to the reference to the wording of 'exemplary standards of design' required by Policy CP29 which may be difficult to deliver in all instances and for all development. However, the policy uses the word 'seek' which implies that it cannot always be achieved, and also refers to development needing to be sympathetic to its setting in terms of scale, height, massing and relationship to adjoining buildings, all of which are acknowledged criteria for good design. It seems to me that such references reflect the Authority's objective to ensure good design in development and is consistent with policy guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework, which says in paragraph 56 that the Government places great importance to the design of the built environment.
9. The appellant has also referred me to other dormer extensions within the vicinity, one of which is visible to the rear of the site in Highfield Road. However, I consider that it is not a question of the principle of a dormer extension which is the primary issue, but the design concerns raised by this specific development. In that respect I noted that the dormer to the rear was contained within the roofspace of the original house and is therefore different from the current case.
10. Both parties have also referred me to appeal decisions which support the arguments for and against the proposal. In my view this only goes to show that such applications have to be determined on their individual merits with regard to such factors as particular site circumstances, previous planning history, surrounding character, individual design detailing etc. They have therefore not been decisive in my findings above which I have reached on the specific proposal before me.
11. Although the Authority also raised concerns in its officer report in respect of adverse harm to the tranquillity and appearance of the surrounding National Park, I do not consider that to be the case, given the wholly residential and urban setting of the site. I also note that such a view was not carried forward to the decision notice.
12. With regard to impact upon the amenities of occupiers of adjoining residential properties and having considered that issue at my site visit, I agree with the

Authority that there is no significant loss of natural light arising, as also demonstrated by the '45o rule' illustration. There is some loss of visual amenity as a result of the visual harm identified above. Additionally, I noted that having inspected the site from both bedrooms within the dormer extension, the full length windows give direct views into neighbouring rear gardens. Whilst not being decisive in its own right given the intervisibility between rear gardens from other first floor windows of these properties, it adds to my overall concerns in relation to the development.

13. Finally, the authority raises no objections to the pitched roof over the single storey rear extension and I see no reason to reach a different finding from both a design and amenity point of view.
14. For the above reasons, the dormer extensions have harmed the character of the host dwelling and the local area when viewed from nearby vantage points at the rear. It is therefore contrary to Policy CP29 of the Authority's Joint Core Strategy 2014, Policy HE2 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan 2nd Review 2006 and Policy BEP1 of the Petersfield Neighbourhood Plan 2015, in that it is not sympathetic in design, scale or massing to the original building or the local area and its roof form does not respect the form of the original building.
15. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

Kim Bennett

INSPECTOR