



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 August 2019

by Nick Palmer BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/M3835/D/19/3227654

17 Furze Road, High Salvington, Worthing BN13 3BP

- 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 & Mrs Robert and Brenda Bleker against the decision of Worthing Borough Council.
 - The application Ref AWDM/0117/19, dated 20 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 21 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is a two storey rear extension, additional first floor extension over existing ground floor side wing, 3 N^o skylights to front elevation and altered roof design.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The appellant has indicated that the description of the development has not changed from that given on the application form although a different description is given on the appeal form and the Council's decision. There is no correspondence before me to indicate that the amended description in the latter documents was agreed between the parties and so I have used the description given on the application form in the heading.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in the appeal are:
 - i) the effect of the development on the functionality of the adjacent listed windmill in terms of wind flow; and
 - ii) the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, including its effect on the setting of the listed windmill.

Reasons

Functionality of the Windmill

4. The Salvington Windmill is a grade II listed building which dates from the 18th century. It is a post mill with a round house faced with black timbers. It is in working order, is used to produce flour and is a visitor attraction. The functionality of the mill is an important part of its significance. Wind flows are mainly from the south-west and I saw on my visit that the mill was orientated to face that direction. Although the surrounding area has become built up over

the 20th century, houses to the south are at lower levels. The houses and trees in the area have the effect of interrupting the wind flow to the mill however. The area immediately around the mill has been retained as a predominantly open area although this contains two small buildings.

5. The appeal property is the nearest house to the mill, being 20 or so metres to the west. This is a detached house with a gabled roof and has a single storey side extension that projects at an angle to the rear of the house. The proposed development would increase the height of the side/rear extension to two storeys and increase the height of the main roof. These alterations would thus significantly increase the height of the building in close proximity to the mill.
6. Analyses of wind directions and speeds show that main flows are from the west-south-west as well as the south-west. The orientation of the existing dwelling relative to the windmill means that it would be likely to interrupt wind flows from the west. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) has undertaken modelling to demonstrate the effect of the development on wind flow. This demonstrates that the development would cast a wind shadow that would cause a 12% loss of operational area for the mill. However, this is in the context that buildings and trees that are further away from the mill already cast a wind shadow. The effect of this is greater in summer months when the trees are in leaf. SPAB estimates that existing buildings and trees in the area reduce the working capacity of the mill by 75%.
7. The evidence provides clear demonstration that the development would be likely to have some effect upon wind flow to the windmill. The effect is likely to be greater during winter months while there is likely to be a limited effect in the summer, which is when the mill is open to the public.
8. Given the size and height of the proposed development and its proximity to the mill I have concern that it would, in combination with other development that has taken place in the area, have clear potential to further compromise the working of the windmill and its functionality. However, because such harm is identified as potential harm and because the development individually would have a small effect the harm would be less than substantial.

Character and Appearance

9. The green space surrounding the windmill gives it an open setting. There is a sense of openness towards the south where land levels fall. To the north, the houses that are at a higher level are screened by a high hedge along the road. The appeal dwelling is prominent within the setting as it is on the road frontage next to the mill and is close to it. The side gabled wall of the house is seen from the grounds of the mill beneath the canopies of three protected pine trees that are along the side boundary. A boundary hedge screens views of the existing side/rear extension.
10. The proposal would substantially alter the scale of the house when seen from the mill and from the road across the mill grounds. The increase in height of the dwelling and the side/rear extension would be large and prominent features in the setting. The side/rear extension would intrude to some extent into the open aspect from the mill towards the south-west. In the context of the historic open setting around the mill the extensions would be intrusive. For these reasons the proposal would harm the setting of the listed building.

However, the harm would be less than substantial taking into account the existing position and design of the dwelling in relation to the windmill.

11. In the area generally, I saw that the houses are of varied designs. The existing house is of an individual design and permission has been granted for alterations including a front glazed feature and rendering which will alter its appearance. The development would be substantial in scale in relation to the existing house, altering its form and appearance. It would not accord with the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance 'Extending and Altering your Home' which requires that the original house should remain the dominant feature. The resulting development would not necessarily read as an extended house, however. The overall design would have coherence, but it would be quite dominant in the context of its surroundings.
12. Strategic Objective 6 of the Worthing Core Strategy (2011) states that schemes should respect character and local distinctiveness and conserve and enhance built heritage and historic assets. Policy 16 requires design to take account of the historical characteristics of the area. For the reasons given the proposal would not accord with that strategic objective or policy.
13. Policy H16 of the Worthing Local Plan Saved Policies (2007) requires that the scale, design, materials and site coverage of extensions are satisfactory in relation to the existing property and any predominant characteristics of the area. Because of the scale of the development in relation to the historic character of the windmill, the proposal would not accord with that policy.
14. The proposal would greatly improve the accommodation within the house, providing a high standard of family accommodation. This would be of public benefit, but that benefit would be limited, and I give limited weight to this.
15. I have found that the harms to the setting and significance of the heritage asset would be less than substantial. I give great weight to those harms. The limited weight that I give to the public benefit is not sufficient to outweigh this. For the reasons given the proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Nick Palmer

INSPECTOR