



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 August 2019

by Christopher Miell MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18th September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Y9507/D/19/3230829

The Firs, Green Lane, Hambledon PO7 4SX

- 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 Jay Tucker against the decision of the South Downs National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref SDNP/19/00712/HOUS, dated 12 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 24 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is a two storey rear and single storey side extension and elevational alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. It has been brought to my attention that the South Downs National Park Local Plan 2014-2033 (SDLP) was adopted on 2 July 2019. The SDLP replaces the Winchester District Local Plan (2006) and the Winchester City Council Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy (2013). It is incumbent on me to take into account the most relevant and up to date information in reaching a decision and I have therefore dealt with the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposal adheres to the Authority's strategy for the extension of existing dwellings in the South Downs National Park and whether or not the proposal would lead to the loss of a small to medium sized home.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a detached, two storey, three bedroom dwelling located amongst a small cluster of residential properties on Green Lane, which is to the north of the village of Hambledon. The surrounding area has a rural character and the appeal site is situated within the South Downs National Park (SDNP). It is proposed to erect a two storey rear extension and single storey side extension at the property.
5. A replacement detached double garage and log store with first floor storage space above has been recently constructed at the appeal site. Whilst I have not been provided with a copy of the approved documents, it is understood from

- the main parties that planning permission¹ was granted for the works in March 2018.
6. Policy SD31 of the SDLP seeks to avoid the over-extension of existing dwellings within the SDNP. With respect to the size of extensions and the provision of annexes and outbuildings, criterion 1(a) of the policy advises that proposals should not increase the gross internal area (GIA) of the existing dwelling² by more than approximately 30%. Proposals which exceed the 30% size limit may be considered acceptable if they are required to accommodate exceptional family needs, such as those arising from disabled or older family members. To justify such a proposal, the application must be supported by robust evidence.
 7. The supporting text to Policy SD31 explains that the purpose of the policy is two-fold. The first is to avoid the over extension of existing dwellings, which may have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of both settlements and the countryside. The second is to maintain a mix of homes consistent with Policy SD27: Mix of Homes of the SDLP, which amongst other things seeks to protect the limited supply of small and medium-sized homes in the National Park. The supporting text to Policy SD27 explains that the Authority's strategy has been informed by detailed modelling of housing market trends up until 2033, which concludes that the Authority should focus on delivering smaller family housing for younger households.
 8. Policy SD31 does not explicitly define the term 'small and medium-sized homes'. However, Policy SD27 of the SDNP seeks to deliver a high proportion of two and three-bedroom dwellings as part of standard occupancy housing developments, to meet the identified need for smaller family housing for younger households.
 9. In this instance, the Authority's officer report identifies that the appeal property is a medium-sized home. As a matter of fact and degree, I consider that the appeal property is a modest, three-bedroom dwelling and it is thus a medium-sized home.
 10. The Authority have calculated that the proposal would increase the GIA of the existing dwelling (excluding any outbuildings) by approximately 89%. When the recently constructed outbuilding is taken into account, the cumulative impact of the previous extensions and the current proposal would result in an approximate 145% increase to the GIA of the existing dwelling. The appellant argues that the Authority's calculation fails to take into account that the recently constructed outbuilding is smaller than the garage which it replaced. However, no evidence has been put forward by the main appeal party to substantiate this argument.
 11. Even if I were to accept the lower 89% calculation, which excludes outbuildings, the proposal would still greatly exceed the approximate 30% limit for extensions to existing dwellings imposed by Policy SD31 and would increase the number of bedrooms at the dwelling from three to five, which would result in the loss of a medium-sized home. No evidence of 'exceptional family needs' has been put forward by the appellant to justify the size of the proposed extension.

¹ Authority Reference: SDNP/18/00587/HOUS

² For the purpose of Policy SD31, the term 'existing dwelling' refers to the residential unit that existed on 18 December 2002 or, if built after that date, as originally built.

12. In conclusion, the proposal would result in the loss of an existing three bedroom medium-sized home for which there is an identified need. Consequently, the proposal would be at odds with the Authority's strategy for the extension of existing dwellings, which aims to protect the limited supply of small and medium-sized homes within the SDNP by avoiding the over-extension of existing dwellings. As such, the proposal would not accord with Policies SD27 and SD31 of the SDLP.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Christopher Miell

INSPECTOR