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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 November 2019

**by Helen O'Connor LLB MA MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 03 December 2019**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/Y9507/D/19/3234591**

**Dormer Cottage, Lower Lodge Road, Linchmere GU27 3NG**

- 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 and Mrs Garrard against the decision of South Downs National Park Authority.
  - The application Ref SDNP/19/01585/HOUS, dated 29 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 21 June 2019.
  - The development proposed is a two storey rear extension with associated roof works and various alterations and additions, and single storey extension to an outbuilding.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for a two storey rear extension with associated roof works and various alterations and additions, and single storey extension to an outbuilding at Dormer Cottage, Lower Lodge Road, Linchmere GU27 3NG in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref SDNP/19/01585/HOUS, dated 29 March 2019 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: Location Plan 07/063-011; Ground Floor Proposed 07/063-003; First Floor Proposed 07/063-004; Roof Plans 07/063-005; Proposed Elevations 07/063-007; Engine House Plans 07/063-008; Engine House Proposed Elevations 07/063-010 and Draft Section 07/063-012.
  - 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in the materials shown on the following plans: Proposed Elevations 07/063-007 and Engine House Proposed Elevations 07/063-010.
  - 4) The development shall proceed in accordance with the Mitigation, Compensation and Enhancement measures detailed in paragraphs 6.5-6.18 of the Bat Emergence/Re-entry Surveys and Mitigation Plan report prepared by Darwin Ecology dated December 2018.

## **Procedural Matters**

2. I have amended the description of development in my heading above from that used in the application form by omitting the reference to a porch, as this was not included as part of the appeal proposal.
3. The South Downs Local Plan 2014-2033 (SDLP) was adopted in July 2019 and now forms part of the development plan. The policies of the Chichester District Local Plan First Review (1999) referred to by the Authority in their decision notice are therefore superseded. I consider that the most relevant policies in the recently adopted development plan have broadly similar objectives to those replaced and as such, there have been no fundamental changes insofar as is relevant to the circumstances of this appeal decision. Given the advanced stage of preparation of the SDLP at the time of the decision, the Authority referred to the relevant emerging policies in the decision notice and Planning Officer report. The appellants have referred to the SDLP in their statement. As such, I am satisfied that no injustice will result from the change in policy circumstances. I have therefore determined the appeal accordingly.

## **Main Issue**

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building with particular reference to whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Linchmere Conservation Area.

## **Reasons**

### *Character and appearance*

5. The Linchmere Conservation Area (CA) covers the central part of the dispersed rural settlement, and its significance lies primarily the way the mix of buildings and spaces within the Wealdon landscape reflect the evolution of the settlement over time. The appeal site concerns a modest detached cottage positioned within a group of vernacular buildings near St Peter's Church at the core of the settlement. Historically it was attached to Linchmere House, a larger property located to the south<sup>1</sup>. Its traditional form and use of local materials within a group of such buildings makes an attractive and positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA. This is reflected in the analysis map of the Linchmere Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan, December 2016<sup>2</sup> which identifies the appeal building as having townscape merit with potential for future local listing. I am mindful of my statutory duty<sup>3</sup> to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA in my determination.
6. The appeal proposal would introduce a centrally positioned two storey extension, incorporating dormer windows onto the rear elevation of the cottage. It would further add a small addition to the detached outbuilding known as the Engine House. The parties disagree as to the impact of the two storey extension on the character and appearance of Dormer Cottage and the CA.

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<sup>1</sup> Planning reference 10/02014/FUL Separation of Linchmere House and Dormer Cottage

<sup>2</sup> Page 28

<sup>3</sup> Section 72 Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

7. Notwithstanding the modest ridge height of the main cottage, the rear extension would have a gable roof with a lower height. It would be located centrally within the rear elevation such that it would not be seen in most views of the principal, and most publicly prominent, elevation.
8. Whilst some glimpses of the side and rear elevations of the property would be possible from the cricket ground to the north, the development would be a considerable distance from the cricket ground and would be partially shielded by the planting along the northern boundary. Moreover, the development would be seen in the context of surrounding built form which includes the much larger Linchmere house in close proximity. Additionally, the use of matching traditional materials would further assimilate the development into the group of vernacular buildings.
9. Furthermore, the width of the extension would be modest in comparison to the width of the existing rear elevation and its depth would be less than that of the main dwelling<sup>4</sup>. Its projecting form at ninety degrees to the main dwelling would read as a later addition, with the older form of the dwelling remaining clearly discernible. The photograph dated 1892<sup>5</sup> shows that this design approach would not be dissimilar to methods of extending Linchmere House used in the past.
10. Taking these factors together, the proposed rear extension respects the intrinsic characteristics of the host dwelling in terms of its height, massing, roof form, architectural style, vernacular detailing and materials. As a result, it would not be unduly prominent nor dominate the host dwelling. Neither would it be of a scale or form that would undermine the rural, verdant characteristics of the CA.
11. I therefore conclude that the proposal would be in keeping with the qualities of the host building such that it would preserve the character and appearance of the CA. Hence, it would not result in harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset. It follows that given I have not found harm would be caused to the historic environment, the proposal would not conflict with the purposes of the national park designation nor the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework that seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment.
12. Furthermore, it would accord with policies SD1, SD4, SD5, SD12 and SD15 of the SDLP which amongst other matters, include provisions that when taken in combination, seek to ensure development conserves and enhances landscape character and the historic environment incorporating a sensitive design that respects local distinctiveness. Policy SD15 only permits development in conservation areas which preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the conservation area.
13. In addition, it would not conflict with Policy 9 of the South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan, Shaping the future of your South Downs National Park 2014-19, which seeks to protect the significance of the historic environment from harm.

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<sup>4</sup> Ground Floor Proposed 07/063-003 shows depth of 5m for the proposed extension compared to 5.501m depth of main cottage

<sup>5</sup> Photograph from May 1892 of rear elevation of part of appeal building and Linchcome House, page 21 Appellant's Appeal Statement

### **Conditions**

14. The three year period in which the planning permission may be implemented is a statutory requirement but I also consider that it is necessary to specify the plans that are approved and that the development shall be undertaken in accordance with these, as this provides certainty.
15. A condition requiring that the external materials match those on the original house and outbuilding as shown on the submitted elevation plans, is necessary given their importance to the overall quality of the design and local distinctiveness.
16. The submitted ecological information in relation to bats, a protected species, included mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures. Accordingly, the scheme must proceed in accordance with those measures to adequately safeguard bats.

### **Conclusion**

17. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

*Helen O'Connor*

Inspector