The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 September 2020

by D J Barnes MBA BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/B9506/D/20/3248790
Forest Cottage, Southampton Road, Cadnam SO40 2NQ

- 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 David and Mrs Helen Gouldbourne against the decision of the New Forest National Park Authority.
- The application Ref 19/00972, dated 17 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 17 February 2020.
- The development proposed is a 2 storey extension; 1 No. outbuilding; porch; alterations to doors and windows and removal of existing 1 storey extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the two storey extension, porch, alterations to doors and windows and removal of the existing 1 storey extension. The appeal is allowed and planning permission granted insofar as it relates to the erection of the outbuilding at Forest Cottage, Southampton Road, Cadnam SO40 2NQ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/00972, dated 17 December 2019 and the plans submitted with it so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted and 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: ADP/1800/P/00; ADP/1800/P/04A; ADP/1800/P/05A; ADP/1800/P/06 and ADP/1800/P/07.

    3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be those specified on Drawing No. ADP/1800/P/007.

Procedural Matter

2. For reasons of clarity, the description of development has been adopted from the Authority's decision notice because it more accurately describes the elements of the appeal scheme.

Main Issue

3. It is considered that the main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a detached 2-storey dwelling described by the Authority and appellants as originally being a modest sized thatched cob cottage. The property itself has been altered by a 2-storey extension which reflects the scale, form, rendered walls, fenestration and timber detailing of the original cottage. Other alterations include the replacement of the thatched roof with tiles and the erection of a large addition incorporating a kitchen, garage and workshop. This addition is already wider than the main part of the property

5. The proposed development includes the demolition of the addition and its replacement by an extension with living accommodation within the roofspace above the ground floor. The appeal scheme also includes the erection of an outbuilding, in the form of a detached garage, within the property's sizable and verdant curtilage. The Authority has not raised a specific objection to the erection of the proposed outbuilding. This is a case where the proposed outbuilding is clearly severable and both physically and functionally independent from the proposed extension. Accordingly, there exists the potential to issue a split decision in this case.

6. The property is located within the Forest Central North Conservation Area where there is a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. This duty is echoed in Policy SP16 of the New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016-2036 (LP). The character of this extensive Conservation Area consists of open heathland, woodland pasture and woodland with a mixture of buildings of varying ages and styles served by a series of narrow roads and lanes. Cadnam, within which the property is located, has a mix of buildings of different character and appearance.

7. The property and surrounding area are also located within the New Forest National Park where the statutory purposes include conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of such parks. Further, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) stipulates that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of National Parks.

8. By reason of the design, scale and materials, the demolition of the existing addition would represent an enhancement to the character and appearance of both the existing property, the Conservation Area and the National Park. Although the design and materials of the current addition are not of high quality, this should not alone be a reason for allowing a proposal that would fail to fully respect the character and appearance of the main part of the property. The requirement for new development to be of high quality design is identified in LP Policies DP2 and SP17. Further advice guidance on design quality within the National Park is contained in the Authority's *Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document* (SPD).

9. Although wider than the main part of the property and thereby conflicting with the SPD's guidance, in this case the overall footprint of the proposed extension would be smaller than the current addition. Further, the eaves and ridge height of the proposed extension would be lower than the roof of the main part of the property. For these reasons, the scale of this element of the appeal scheme would represent a subservient extension to the property.

10. However, I share the Authority's concerns about the design of the proposed extension, specifically the roof dormers and the fenestration. These elements of the appeal scheme are not common features within the Conservation Area and they do not fully respect the simpler fenestration of the main part of the property. This is particularly the case with the kitchen window which would be a prominent horizontal area of glazing wrapping around the corner of the extension and, as such, it would not represent a high quality of design.

11. Within the Conservation Area it was noted that there are examples of timber cladding being used as an external material but these were generally for outbuildings; structures which have the appearance of being independent from the host building and parts of elevations. Accordingly, the use of timber cladding for the external walls of the proposed extension would not reflect the predominant materials for dwellings within the Conservation Area. This choice of materials would also fail to respect the character and appearance of the main part of the property, including the rendered walls with timber detailing. Although set back from the road, the design and materials of the proposed extension would be seen from public viewpoints.

12. The Framework identifies that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset then this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. There would be a benefit from the removal of the existing addition which detracts from the character and appearance of the property. However, this benefit has to be assessed against the proposed development not being of a high quality of design. This is a case where the benefit claimed by the appellants for the proposed extension does not outweigh the harm which has been identified.

13. The proposed detached garage would be erected with timber walls and tiles roof which would respect other outbuildings elsewhere within the Conservation Area. By reason of its siting and modest scale, this element of the appeal scheme would not be visually prominent from public viewpoints and would appear subservient to the size of the host property. There would still remain the appearance of a dwelling sited within a verdant garden. For these reasons, the proposed outbuilding would not cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the property, would preserve and conserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and conserve the landscape and scenic beauty of the National Park.

14. For the reasons given, it is concluded that the proposed two storey extension, porch, alterations to doors and windows and removal of the existing 1 storey extension would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area and, as such, these elements of the appeal scheme would conflict with LP Policies SP16, SP17, and DP2 and the SPD. Conversely, it is concluded that the proposed outbuilding would not cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area and, as such, this element of the appeal scheme would not conflict with LP Policies SP16, SP17, and DP2 and the SPD.

Other Matters

15. The Authority has raised concerns about the lack of any survey to establish whether bats are present or not within the roofspace of the property which would be altered by the proposed extension. In this case, because the appeal for the proposed extension is failing for other reasons, I do not need to

consider whether harm would be caused to a protected species or its habitat if the proposed works were caried out.

Conditions

16. The Authority has suggested several conditions in the event this appeal succeeds which have been assessed against the tests in the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance. Conditions are necessary to ensure that the proposed outbuilding is erected in accordance with the approved drawings and using the specified materials. However, conditions concerning slab level and the ecological management measures are considered unnecessary taking into account the nature and siting of the proposed outbuilding.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given, it is concluded that this appeal should be dismissed in respect of the two storey extension, porch, alterations to doors and windows and removal of the existing 1 storey extension but allowed for the erection of the outbuilding.

D J Barnes

INSPECTOR