



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 January 2021

by Kim Langford Tejrar LLB (Hons) BSc (Hons) PGDIP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/C1435/D/20/3262122

Lanrick, Back Lane, Cross in Hand, Heathfield TN21 0ND

- 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 Mrs J Cosgrove against the decision of Wealden District Council.
 - The application Ref WD/2020/1008/FR, dated 25 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 24 September 2020.
 - The development proposed is to extend the existing residential unit to provide first floor accommodation, re-build and re-clad the existing store area to the rear of the garage and install solar panels.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted to extend the existing residential unit to provide first floor accommodation, re-build and re-clad the existing store area to the rear of the garage and install solar panels at Lanrick, Back Lane, Cross in Hand, Heathfield TN21 0ND in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref WD/2020/1008/FR, dated 25 May 2020, subject to the condition set out in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development on the application form was amended to reflect the fact that the application was made retrospectively. I have referred to the original description for the purposes of this appeal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, particularly in relation to its effect on the host outbuilding, host dwelling and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Reasons

4. Lanrick (the host dwelling) is a two-storey detached dwelling situated in extensive grounds. The dwelling, contrary to the contention in the reasons for refusal, does not have a utilitarian appearance but is grand in its design proportions and overall size. An outbuilding (the host outbuilding) is located to the west of the dwelling. It has a single storey appearance from its front elevation and constructed in brick with some elements of timber cladding. The grounds are well-landscaped. The site is relatively enclosed on three sides, and benefits from views across the wider countryside from the area in front of the house. To the rear of the host building, the ground level rises. The site is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

5. The outbuilding has a modest utilitarian yet attractive traditional design. Due to the topography, its siting back from the main dwelling, proximity to the boundary and the landscaped enclosure of the site, it is the front elevation which forms the main context for the relationship between the host outbuilding and the host dwelling. The extensions to the rear of the outbuilding do not extend above its existing elongated roof ridge. As such, the front elevation has remained unaffected by the proposal and the proportions of the extensions have successfully maintained the traditional appearance and subservience of the outbuilding.
6. From the rear, the single storey extensions appear subservient to the main outbuilding itself due to their limited height and relative size. Though flat roof extensions can appear bulky or dominant, the design of the extension integrates well with the existing proportions of the outbuilding and they utilise the existing pitched-roof return of the building to reduce their prominence and apparent bulk. Moreover, the ground level rises away from the rear of the building, preventing the extended building from appearing large or dominant and mature landscaping around the building obscure much of the extension from view even within the grounds.
7. The overall proportions of the extended outbuilding remain in keeping with its subordinate and modest relationship with the sizeable dwelling. The proportions, design and use of timber cladding further respects the existing traditional utilitarian character and proportions of the outbuilding.
8. The extensions have limited prominence and visibility within the grounds and its capacity to be seen within, and affect the character of, the wider countryside and AONB landscape is very limited. The grounds are well enclosed and where the site is most open to the wider landscape, the dwelling would intervene and obscure the outbuilding from view due to the outbuilding's size and setback.
9. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would not have an unacceptable adverse effect on the character of the area, including the host outbuilding, host dwelling and wider AONB landscape. The proposal therefore accords with saved policies GD2, EN1, EN6, EN27, DC19 and HG10 of the Wealden Local Plan (adopted in 1998) and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). These policies seek, amongst other things, sustainable development of high quality design which respects the character of existing buildings, the area and AONB.

Conditions

10. As the appeal is retrospective and the development is substantially completed, it is not necessary to impose a commencement condition. It is necessary to impose a condition requiring completion in accordance with the approved plans.

Conclusion

11. The appeal proposal would respect the character and appearance of existing buildings, the wider area and AONB and would accord with the relevant policies of the Development Plan. The appeal is allowed.

Kim Langford Tejrar

INSPECTOR

Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 0404-PL-04, 0404-PL-05 Rev A, 0404_PL-06 Rev A, 0350-PL-07, 0350-PL-08.