



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 May 2021

by J Ayres BA Hons, Solicitor

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Y9507/D/21/3269555

**Ridgeview (formerly Spindles), East Harting Street, East Harting,
Petersfield GU31 5LY**

- 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 Moulton against the decision of South Downs National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref SDNP/20/04320/HOUS, dated 6 October 2020, was refused by notice dated 23 December 2020.
 - The development proposed is front garden pergola.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for front garden pergola at Ridgeview (formerly Spindles), East Harting Street, East Harting, Petersfield GU31 5LY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref SDNP/20/04320/HOUS, dated 6 October 2020, 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; Site Location Plan – 17.003-001; Site Block Plan – 17.003-002; Proposed Pergola Floor Plan and Elevations – 17.003-200 Rev C.
 - 3) No work other than site surveying or investigation shall commence until a full schedule of all materials and finishes and samples of such materials and finishes to be used for the posts and roof of the pergola have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved schedule of materials and finishes unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, having regard to the site being within the South Downs National Park (SDNP) and the East Harting Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

3. East Harting is a small rural hamlet separated from the larger village of South Harting by countryside, which surrounds both settlements. Most of the hamlet falls within the CA, the significance of which appears to be characterised by attractive vernacular buildings arranged in sporadic clusters. The outward vistas towards the surrounding countryside contribute positively to its significance.
4. To the south of the site the land rises sharply to a chalk scarp, known as Harting Down. The wider site is clearly visible from parts of this hilltop, which is crossed by paths, including the South Downs Way, and open access fields. The dwelling as erected forms part of a row of residential properties, which sit within the hamlet and are a pleasant feature of the rural landscape. The proposal would not be visible from these vantage points due to its location to the front of the site.
5. The site is slightly higher than the adjacent lane by approximately 1.5metres, however views into it are largely screened by the vegetation along the boundary which is continuing to establish. As a result, views into the site are dependent on standing in the driveway, and at this point the house is the main feature of the site, which is set back significantly from the lane and supported by a generous level of space around it.
6. The proposed development would be open on all sides, formed of six timber posts to support a roof structure which would be at a very slight angle rising from 2.4 metres to 2.7 metres. The completely open design would sit comfortably within the site and would have no greater impact on the views into the site and beyond than the parking of two vehicles. This, combined with the existing levels of space within the site and established boundary planting would preserve the first purpose of the National Park designation and respect the significance of the CA with regards to long reaching views through the established residential grain.
7. I have considered the previous appeals on the site. The dwelling was permitted at appeal (Ref APP/Y9507/W/18/3208006). The Inspector included a condition removing a number of permitted development rights, including the construction of outbuildings. The Inspector was clear in his reasoning that the reason for that condition was due to the building being readily visible from the front, whilst also sitting within in an important wider landscape vista from Harting Down. I agree with the Inspector's position that due to the sensitive nature future potential additions should be considered through the planning process. However, the condition did not restrict any development at a future date, it correctly secured the need for any development to be properly assessed in its context by the relevant authority.
8. The previously dismissed scheme (APP/Y9507/W/20/3246808) related to a significantly larger structure which would have been far more dominant within the site and from external views. I am satisfied that the scheme before me is materially different to the previous appeal.
9. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, which is the first purpose of designation of the SDNP. Having regard to the open structure that is proposed and the absence of harm that I

have found regarding views through the site and towards the SDNP, I am satisfied that the proposal would not conflict with the first purpose of designation of the SDNP or the NPPF.

10. I find that the proposal would Policies 1 and 9 of the South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan 2020-2025 and policies SD4, SD5, SD12, SD15, SD31 of the South Downs National Park Local Plan 2019. Collectively these policies advise that proposals will only be permitted where they conserve and enhance landscape character and the historic environment, including the character of the CA, by incorporating good design and integrating with the character of the landscape.

Conclusion and Conditions

11. I have found that the proposal would comply with the development plan when taken as a whole, and therefore the appeal should succeed.
12. I have considered the suggested conditions and amend as necessary for the sake of clarity. I have specified the plans for certainty. I have included a condition relating to materials as I consider this necessary as the site is within the SDNP and CA and therefore materials should be sensitive to the landscape character.
13. For the reasons above and having regard to all other matters raised I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

J Ayres

INSPECTOR