
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 July 2021

by H Lock BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 August 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/X3540/D/21/3270591

Albermarle House, Bealings Road, Martlesham, IP12 4RW

- 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 Zac Hembry against the decision of East Suffolk Council.
 - The application Ref. DC/20/4633/FUL, dated 16 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 18 January 2021.
 - The development proposed is alteration and extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for alteration and extension at Albermarle House, Bealings Road, Martlesham, IP12 4RW, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. DC/20/4633/FUL, dated 16 November 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 19027-100 Rev P3; 19027-200 Rev P3; 19027-201 Rev P3; 19027-202 Rev P3; 19027-101 Rev P5; 19027-301 Rev P3; 19027-302 Rev P2 & 19027-303 Rev P2.
 - 3) The materials and finishes shall be as indicated within the submitted application and thereafter retained as such, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Procedural Matters

2. Drawing no. 19027/301 Rev P2 submitted with the application shows the proposed first-floor layout of the wing the subject of this appeal with three bedrooms. However, version Rev P3 included in the submitted Planning Statement identified these rooms as a cinema, sauna and gym, albeit with beds and bathrooms shown. The Council has confirmed that the revised plan 19027-301-P3 is the correct floor plan for the application, as although formally submitted after determination, it is an accurate representation of what is being sought by the appellant as outlined within their planning statement, and it was the plan on which the Council made its assessment.

3. Although the plan was not subject of public consultation, the differences between the two drawings solely concern the way in which the first-floor rooms would be used as part of the main dwelling and do not impact upon the scale, height or massing of the extension. I therefore do not consider that interested parties would be prejudiced by the acceptance of drawing no. 19027-301-P3, and I have determined the appeal on that basis.
4. An extension of the form and design proposed in this appeal is nearing completion, and the proposed changes relating to the conversion and extension of a former tractor shed appear to have taken place. However, there are some differences between the development as built and that shown on the submitted plans, such as the materials, and openings on the rear elevation. For the avoidance of doubt, this appeal has been determined on the basis of the development 'as proposed' on the submitted plans, rather than assessing the development as built.
5. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on 20 July 2021, but as the revisions do not materially change the national approach to development of this nature it has not been necessary to seek the views of the parties on this matter.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the dwelling.

Reasons

7. The appeal property is a substantial dwelling that is in the process of being refurbished and extended. It is reached by a long driveway set some distance from Bealings Road, and due to the extensive vegetation on the site and beyond, the dwelling has limited visual impact beyond its immediate setting. It sits between two other dwellings, neither of which are visible from the appeal site as a result of the separation distances and planting.
8. The original barn appears to have been of simple linear form, but as a result of a link extension and the conversion and extension of a former tractor shed, as previously approved¹ it would be a substantial building with a more complex form and layout. An extension has been built to the rear of the 'tractor shed' in the form of that proposed in this appeal. Whilst such a development would alter the original layout of the converted building, it would nevertheless respond to the local context, and its scale would appear proportionate given the size of the host building. Its position means that it would be largely screened from view on approach to the dwelling by the existing converted tractor shed, and this and the site levels would further mitigate its effect on the host dwelling.
9. The adjacent 'Little Foxes' (now 'Mulberry Court') was not visible on site, but the details of that property supplied in the Planning Statement indicate that the resultant Albermarle House would be of a scale, character, layout, height and massing that would be well related to other developments in the surroundings, in accordance with the aims of Policy SCLP11.1 of the East Suffolk Council – Suffolk Coastal Local Plan 2020 (LP).

¹ Planning permission was granted for 'The alteration and extension of the Barn at Little Foxes, Bealings Road' under ref. DC/20/0204/FUL.

10. I therefore conclude that the proposal would respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling, in accordance with the aims of LP Policy SCLP11.1, and Policy MAR4 of the Martlesham Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2031, which amongst other criteria requires development to demonstrate good quality design which responds to and integrates with local surroundings and the local landscape context as well as the existing built environment, and which respects the scale and character of existing and surrounding buildings.

Other Matters

11. Tree Preservation Order No.22 relates to a number of woodland areas, roadside strips and avenues across various parishes, including Martlesham. On the basis of the information supplied in this appeal, no preserved tree would be prejudiced by the appeal proposal.
12. According to the Council's Delegated Report, the appeal site formed part of Beaconhill House, a Grade II listed building, until later in the 20th century. However, I share the Council's assessment that the severance of the plots has reduced the importance of this site to Beaconhill House's significance, which is derived from its spacious garden curtilage and the wider character of substantial dwellings in very large plots. Viewed on the ground, the proposal would have a neutral effect on the significance of the heritage asset, and would not affect the ability to appreciate that significance.

Conditions

13. As I have determined this appeal on the basis of the proposals shown on the submitted plans, I have applied the standard time limit for implementation. I have also attached the recommended condition of the Council regarding materials, in order to safeguard the character and appearance of the development and the area. For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning I also impose a condition specifying the approved plans.

Conclusion

14. For the above reasons, I conclude that this appeal should be allowed.

H Lock

INSPECTOR