



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 December 2021

by R J Redford MTCP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 DECEMBER 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/M1710/D/21/3281926

Frith End Farm, Frith End Road, Firth End, Bordon, GU35 0QZ

- 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 Rupert Allhusen against the decision of East Hampshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 32607/006, dated 20 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 13 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as "A proposal to demolish the existing porch and build two- and one-story side extensions along with new porch and the renovation of the existing residential house throughout, incorporating installation of insulation and airtsource heating."
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. I observed that the development described above has been partially completed insofar as the south elevation porch has been removed and alterations carried out to the fenestration. I have dealt with the appeal on this basis.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on: -
 - the character and appearance of both the dwelling and surrounding area; and
 - the range of dwelling sizes within the area.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. Frith End is a ribbon development of residential properties within a countryside setting. The appeal property is located on an unmade track, behind a group of larger houses, to the southern end of Frith End. Clear views into and beyond the site are possible from the public bridleway which runs along its northern boundary.
5. The proposed development would be subservient in form and scale to the host dwelling, when viewed from the south and east elevations. This is in accordance with the key points set out within the Council's 'Residential Extensions & Householder Development' Supplementary Planning Document.

6. However, the proposed continuation of the flat roof along the northern elevation, would emphasise the overall mass and scale of that proposed, thus overwhelming the original property. This would undermine its appearance by emphasising a low quality, later, element of the host dwelling, rather than enhancing its original character and design. This incongruity would also draw attention when viewed in the wider context from the bridleway thus harming the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
7. The green energy measures and environmental improvements put forward by the appellant to mitigate any harm of the proposal do bare weight, especially in relation to Policy CP29, criterion j). However, they do not outweigh the harm caused to the character and appearance of the property and area, as they are not solely reliant on the proposed development. This is because they could be implemented independently or adapted to suit any other scheme on the site.
8. In conclusion, the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the appeal property and area. It would therefore conflict with Policy HE2 of the East Hampshire Local Plan: Second Review, and Policy CP29 of the East Hampshire District Council: Joint Core Strategy.

Range of dwelling sizes

9. Policy H16 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan seeks to protect the range of dwelling sizes outside of the settlement policy boundaries, specifically the over development of smaller dwellings. This is to ensure that over time, smaller more affordable dwellings are not lost. It sets out a series of prescriptive mathematical criteria used to gauge the impact of extensions / alterations to a property, on the existing housing stock.
10. Both parties agree that the proposed development would exceed the size criteria set out in Policy H16. However, in this specific instance the existing 4-bed property is attached to a significant parcel of land and so would not be considered a smaller, less expensive dwelling, should it be made available. The proposal would increase the property to 5-beds, but it would remain within the same dwelling size bracket as set out in Policy H16.
11. On balance therefore, I do not consider that the proposal would equate to such a change in dwelling size as to constitute a loss of a smaller, less expensive dwelling, nor would the proposal modify the property to such an extent as to significantly alter its residential offer.
12. I conclude, that although not numerically compliant with said policy, in these specific circumstances, the proposed development would maintain the current provision of the range of dwelling sizes outside the settlement policy boundary, in accordance with the spirit of Policy H16.

Other Matters

13. The argument has been made by the appellant that the proposed development should be considered under paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (now reflected as paragraph 80 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021). This is specific to the provision of a new isolated dwelling within the countryside, however the proposal in front of me is for the extension of an existing dwelling within a small settlement, within the countryside. Therefore, I am unable to attribute any weight to this.

14. They have also referred to the potential of extending the property under permitted development. However, details of the extent of this have not been submitted and so I am unable to assess it against the proposed development.
15. Finally, I note within the application there were three public representations. Two were concerned with the impact on occupants of an adjacent property. However, I agree with the Council's conclusion that the proposal would not cause harm to the living conditions of occupants of any neighbouring dwellings. I also appreciate that the third was in support of the design, and my considerations relating to that are set out above.

Conclusion

16. I have found that the proposed development would comply with the spirit of Policy H16, regarding the maintenance of the range of dwelling sizes; and Policy CP29 criterion j), in terms of green energy measures and environmental improvements. However, on balance, these matters do not outweigh the harm the proposal would have on the character and appearance of both the dwelling and the surrounding area.
17. Consequently, the appeal scheme does not comply with the development plan and there are no other material considerations that would indicate a contrary decision. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

RJ Redford

INSPECTOR