



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 May 2022

by J Reid BA(Hons) BArch(Hons) RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 May 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Y9507/D/22/3290067

Mottistone Cottage, Terwick Hill, Rogate GU31 5EJ

- 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 Richard Palfrey against the decision of the South Downs National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref SDNP/21/03427/HOUS, dated 24 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 22 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is erection of a new oak framed garage provided by English Heritage Oak.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The heading of the Decision Notice explains that Chichester District Council and the South Downs National Park Authority are 'Working in Partnership'. The South Downs National Park Authority, as the Local Planning Authority, issued the Decision Notice, so the details in the banner heading above reflect that, and I shall deal with the appeal on that basis.

Reasons

3. The main issue is the effect that the proposed development would have on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
4. The appeal site is outside the built-up area boundary of any settlement designated in the Development Plan, so it is, in policy terms, in the countryside. It is also within the South Downs National Park, which has the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.
5. The site is on the roughly north east side of the A272, and much of its roadside boundary includes a tall hedge and close boarded fence, with a gated access towards its north west end. In line with the few other dwellings close by, the appeal dwelling is set well back from the road. The land in front of the dwelling includes a drive that is a little lower than the road, and the present good-sized garage, which is in front of the north west end of the dwelling. The local landscape to roughly north and south includes broadly flat open fields partly edged by hedgerows and intermittent trees, and woodland blocks to roughly west and east. So, the surrounding area has a rural character and appearance.
6. The proposed 3 car garage, with its lean-to and external stairs to the upper floor in its roof space, would be sited in front of the dwelling, roughly parallel

to, and close to, the road. Due to its substantial scale and prominent siting, the proposal would harmfully erode the important openness between the front of the dwelling and the road, so it would look dominant and squeezed in. Because its bulky built form would be seen above the fence, the urbanising effect of the proposal would damage the natural beauty and landscape character of its surroundings. So, in combination with the form and siting of the dwelling and its present garage, the proposal would look unacceptably built-up and incongruous.

7. The hedge by the roadside boundary is taller than the fence, and it would partly screen the proposal in views from the road. However, because the hedge could not reasonably be controlled by condition for more than a few years, it could not be relied upon to screen the development in the long term. The Authority says that the present garage was permitted subject to a condition limiting the use of the garage as a business for 3 years, which has expired. As the existing garage is still used for his business, the appellant says that he would apply for permission to enable that use to continue. However, even if it were to be accepted that another garage could be acceptable, that would not outweigh the harm that the proposal would cause.
8. Therefore, I consider that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would be contrary to Policy SD1 of the South Downs Local Plan (LP) which reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) and seeks to consider the cumulative impacts of development, LP Policy SD4 which aims to conserve and enhance landscape character, LP Policy SD5 which seeks high quality design that adopts a landscape led approach and respects local character, and LP Policy SD31 which aims for extensions and outbuildings to not increase the floorspace of the existing dwelling by more than 30%. It would also be contrary to the first purpose of designation of the National Park which includes to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area, and the Framework which seeks to achieve well-designed places and to conserve and enhance the natural environment.

Conclusion

9. I have found that the proposed development would be contrary to the Development Plan when taken as a whole. The other considerations in this case, including the Framework, do not outweigh that conflict.
10. For the reasons given, the appeal should be dismissed.

J Reid

INSPECTOR