

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 August 2022

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C3810/D/22/3300635

Lock Cottage, Station Road, Ford, Arundel, BN18 0BL

- 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 Brian Donald against the decision of Arun District Council.
 - The application Ref F/1/22/HH, dated 2 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 21 April 2022.
 - The development proposed the erection of single storey side extension to detached garage to create link building and double garage, installation of front porch and alterations to fenestration following the conversion of detached garage to habitable use.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I use the Council's description of development which is more precise than the application form; I note the Appellant also uses this on the appeal form.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on a) the character of the site, b) living conditions for neighbours, and c) the setting of a heritage asset.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey traditional dwelling which occupies a large irregularly shaped plot. To the north of the property sits a detached triple garage; works are planned to and adjoining this. The site is enclosed by hedgerow. It is on the edge of Ford village and is deemed to be countryside in terms of the Adur Local Plan (LP) as it is not within the Built-Up Area Boundary. Other local dwellings are of varied sized plots and architectural styles. The character is of a semi-rural nature and the appearance of the area is pleasing. The appeal proposal is as described above.

Site character

5. Lock Cottage is a simple but interesting, non-intrusive, dwelling in the countryside – it is what one might expect to see in a location such as this. The substantial triple garage, with space over, is already a significant development in relative terms to the dwelling and, whilst fully accepting that it is in situ with
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approval, it does not make a particularly positive contribution to the scene in my opinion. The appeal scheme would add appreciably to the ground coverage and massing in the area of the triple garage. To my mind it would be a step too far and would cumulatively reach the stage where the development other than the original dwelling would regrettably dominate the plot. I consider that the scheme would not be reflective of the character of the host property or the site. It would be overdevelopment within its context. It is interesting to note in passing that the explanatory text to LP Policy D DM4 puts the case that new floorspace of up to 50% is generally considered proportionate whilst beyond that it is not so.

6. The aesthetic situation would not be helped the transformative works planned for the existing triple garage. Accommodation, even if ancillary, would be comprehensive but importantly the *appearance* would be tantamount to a second dwelling with an extension, porch and garaging on the site. This would all be at a scale in excess of the host property, the original Lock Cottage, and in a location where a second dwelling would be alien and contrary to local and national planning policy. This is another reason why scheme would not reflect the pattern of the place and its bulk and form would be harmful on this site.
7. Policies D DM1 and D DM4 in the Arun Local Plan (LP) are pertinent. Taken together and amongst other matters, they seek to ensure that new development would protect local distinctiveness, safeguard the aesthetic qualities of a site, result in well-designed development of suitable scale and form, and ensure extensions and ancillary buildings acknowledge the qualities of, and are subservient to, the host dwelling. Given the foregoing I would conclude that the appeal scheme would conflict with these policies.

Living conditions

8. The Council is concerned that about the overlooking impact to neighbouring properties from two first floor side windows. The windows would serve a bedroom. However, I am not convinced by the Council's case on this matter because the windows are already in situ via a previous approved scheme, they are small in scale, distances to amenity spaces and rear walls of dwellings are considerable, and there is a not insignificant degree of intervening vegetation.
9. LP Policies D DM1 and D DM4 are also pertinent on this issue. Taken together and amongst other matters, they seek to ensure that new development would protect standards of residential amenity for neighbours. Given the foregoing I would conclude that the appeal scheme would not conflict with these policies in this regard.

Heritage Assets

10. St Andrew's Church is a Grade 1 Listed Building which lies to the east of Lock Cottage with access via a long open drive off Station Road running to the south of the appeal property. The Church sits within its own more enclosed grounds and has a sense of rural isolation.
11. The Council is concerned that the character of the setting of the Listed Building would be harmed by the planned development. For my part I would consider that the appeal scheme is sufficiently remote visually from the Church, its main

grounds, and its sense of entrance via the driveway, such as it would have no adverse impact. The experience of arriving at and leaving from the Church will continue to be via an open countryside context, with Lock Cottage itself, as a partial and pleasing addition to this – the new scheme would not intrude. Similarly available angles, distances, scale and vegetation are such that there would be no sense of blocking of any views of the Church from the public realm and in wider views the new development would be very much to the periphery.

12. In the circumstances I conclude that there would not be conflict with the aims of Section 16(2) or Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 relating to preserving the setting of a listed building. Similarly, I conclude that the scheme would not run contrary to the 'heritage asset' related development plan policies, these being LP Policies HER SP1 and HER DM1.

Other matters

13. I do understand the Appellant's wish to extend accommodation and I note that the Council rightly did not raise concerns on a number of technical and aesthetic factors. I recognise that there would be some economic and social gains forthcoming from the scheme and I can see that thought has been given to architectural detail. I have carefully considered these and all the other points raised by the Appellant but these matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to one of the main issues identified above.
14. I confirm that policies in the National Planning Policy Framework have been considered; the Council's policies which I cite mirror relevant objectives within that document.

Overall conclusion

15. For the reasons given above I conclude that whilst the appeal proposal would not have unacceptable adverse effects on living conditions for neighbours or the setting of a heritage asset it would unduly impinge upon the character of the site. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR