



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 December 2022

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Y9507/D/22/3304686

Shepherds Hey, The Street, Poynings, East Sussex, BN45 7AQ.

- 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 Ms Cristina Monteiro against the decision of the South Downs National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref SDNP/21/05652/HOUS, dated 9 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 9 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as: Improvements to an existing pre-1981 extension to eastern elevation including minor expansion; Introduce a new door to western elevation to improve access and maintenance of this area of the site; Internal remodelling to bring the property up to modern standards including Building Control compliance.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. I consider the main issues to be the effect of the proposal on the architectural integrity of the host property, the setting of Forge House and Oak Cottage listed grade II, and whether the development would serve to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Poynings Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. Shepherds Hey, a two-storey dwelling that is attached to Stream Cottage, Forge House and Oak Cottage in a 'L' shape configuration. It is a modest pitched roof dwelling with what, I understand to be a mid 20c single storey flat roof pitched fascia addition built off the east elevation.
4. Neither Shepherds Hey nor Stream Cottage are listed, but Forge House and Oak Cottage are both listed grade II. The property is located in the Poynings Conservation Area and situated within a Dark Night Skies Intrinsic Zone of Darkness.
5. This property, sited hard on the road is open to view from a number of vantage points and is read in the context of Stream Cottage and the two listed buildings to the south. Although, due to its design it has a different character to the adjoining dwellings it nevertheless forms a significant part of character and appearance of the conservation area.

6. The appellant proposes the extension of the existing single storey addition into the enclosed garden by 2.074 metres. Its flat roof with a pitched fascia over would be lower than the existing addition. It is proposed to also reduce the height of the roof to the existing addition to match that of the proposed addition. Unlike the existing extension the addition would not be full width.
7. It is also proposed to close up the existing opening in in the northern boundary wall and to form a new back door in the rear wall of the cottage with access off an existing shared access path.
8. Due to its three-dimensional form and pitched fascia design the existing extension is utilitarian in appearance. A pitched fascia is a traditional way of softening the visual impact of a flat roof extension to a pitched roofed vernacular property. However, here it has not successfully resolved the mix of two contrasting architectural styles. Accordingly, it currently has a negative and detrimental impact on the host dwelling, character of the conservation area and to some extent it also impacts on the setting of the listed buildings to the south. As a result of the requirement for additional accommodation there is now the opportunity to improve upon the design of the existing extension to enhance the setting of the listed buildings and the conservation area.
9. The proposed addition would be modest in scale and due to the proposed reduction in height of the roof of the original addition would not in my judgement have a significantly greater impact on the host property, the setting of the neighbouring listed buildings or the character and appearance of the conservation area. I consider that despite the combined floor area of the two extensions in the context of the that of the host property they would, because of their limited height nevertheless appear subservient to the host cottage.
10. Further, the reduction in height of the earlier extension would result in a greater separation between the roof of the extension and the first floor windows of the cottage. This to my mind would help to visually define the addition as an extension of the original cottage.
11. Nevertheless, given the sensitive open nature of the site, the extension as designed would, in my judgement, by reason of extended run of pitched fascia, result in an inelegant and unattractive design solution. On balance therefore the proposed extension, as designed would by virtue of its design increase the detrimental impact of the existing extension on the architectural integrity of Shepherds Hey and would as a result harm the appearance of the site, the character of the Poynings Conservation Area and albeit to a limited extent the setting of Forge House and Oak Cottage listed grade II. Accordingly, to allow it would be to disregard the duties imposed by Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
12. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, which include conservation areas and listed buildings. It draws a distinction between substantial harm and less than substantial harm to such an asset. For the latter, which applies here, the test is that the harm should be weighed against public benefits, including securing the optimum viable use.
13. The proposed addition would provide additional habitable accommodation and would provide some limited economic benefit. However, given the harm that has been identified I conclude that the public benefits would not outweigh this

harm, or the conflict that the development would have with the objectives of Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Framework and Policies SD4, SD5, SD6, SD12, SD13, SD15 and SD31 of the South Downs Local Plan (Adopted 2 July 2019) (2014–33) as they relate to, amongst other things, the quality of development, the preservation of the setting of listed buildings, and the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Conclusions

14. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR