



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 March 2023

by J Wellstead BA(Hons) MA MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25th April 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/D3830/D/22/3305820

Old Highlands Lodge, London Road, Bolney, West Sussex RH17 5PX

- 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 Chris Mitchell against the decision of Mid Sussex District Council.
 - The application Ref DM/22/1862, dated 13 June 2022, was refused by notice dated 29 July 2022.
 - The development proposed is part 2 storey part single storey side to rear extension with front porch and rear balcony.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a large plot located at the end of a lane within a private estate in a rural location. The plot is screened at the sides by established trees, with fields to the rear and a tennis court to the front. The existing building is set near the centre of the plot and consists of a bungalow with a half hipped and a central vaulted front entrance with gable roof feature.
4. An additional vaulted gable roof feature would be added to the front elevation of the extension, and this would become the main entrance. This would create two very similar projections on the front elevation, resulting in a design that lacks a clearly defined front entrance.
5. The roofline of the extension would reach just below the existing roof ridgeline. The development would project 8m beyond the rear elevation which means the scheme would have a greater depth than the existing building. This depth - in combination with the two-storey height of the proposal - means it would fail to be subordinate to the host property despite the slightly lower height. In this respect it would conflict with principle DG50 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2020) (SPD) which says side extensions should normally be subservient to the original dwelling and set back from the front of the house to help define the original dwelling.
6. The flat roof and stepped rear balcony of the scheme would conflict with the style and pitched roof design of the existing roof, creating an incongruous addition when seen from the rear elevation. Also, from the front, the proposed

gable end would appear at odds with the half-hipped roof form at the opposite end creating an unbalanced appearance.

7. I acknowledge the extension would use matching materials. In addition, the plot is large, the proposed scheme is set back from the boundaries and there are no dwellings immediately adjacent to the site that would be affected. The scheme would also be largely hidden from the public realm due to the mature vegetation along each boundary. Nevertheless, the above does not mean that good design is not required.
8. The appellant has mentioned historic examples of two-storey extensions within the vicinity. I have not been provided with the details of these schemes, but in any case, the exact circumstances of each proposal are likely to be different, and the fact that apparently similar development has been granted permission is not a reason, on its own, to allow unacceptable development.
9. Consequently, I conclude that the development has a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host property. It therefore conflicts with Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031, Policy BOLD1 of the Bolney Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2031 and Principles DG49 and DG50 of the SPD. These policies seek to ensure - amongst other things that new development is of a high-quality that respects the character of existing buildings, reflects Bolney's rural nature and also responds positively to the distinctive character. The proposal also conflicts with the high-quality design aspirations of The Framework. It would also fail to accord with Principle 50 of the SPD as set out above and Principle DG49 which says that extensions should complement and coordinate with the scale, form and massing of the original dwelling.

Other Matters

10. The appellant indicates that the proposal would retain open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area, but this is expected of all development and is therefore a neutral matter in the consideration of this appeal.
11. The appeal scheme would provide a new layout and landscaping for the appellant. However, this personal benefit would not outweigh the harm identified above.
12. The appeal site is located within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Council do not have concerns about the impact on the landscape quality of the AONB and I have no reason to disagree.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given, I conclude that the development conflicts with the development plan, read as a whole. No material considerations have been shown to carry sufficient weight to warrant a decision otherwise than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

J Wellstead

INSPECTOR

