



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 February 2024

by D M Young JP BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI MIHE

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/C3810/W/23/3328459

Lidsey Farm House, Lidsey Road, Bognor Regis, PO22 9PF

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ms N Scott against the decision of Arun District Council.
 - The application Ref AL/58/23/PL is dated 13 April 2023.
 - The development proposed is the erection of 1no dwelling to replace historic caravan and detached garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the setting of Lidsey Farm House (Grade II listed).

Reasons

3. The proposal is for a 4-bedroomed, timber clad building in the grounds of Lidsey Farm House. A significant part of the justification for the new dwelling is that it would replace an existing caravan and free-standing garage to the north of the farmhouse.
4. At the time of my visit, the static caravan shown in the Appellant's appeal documentation had been removed and replaced with a significantly smaller touring caravan. The Appellant suggests that this could be replaced by much larger static caravan akin to the original structure which appears to have stood on the land from about 2001 to 2022.
5. It is not clear from the evidence before me why the caravan was removed or whether it was occupied when it was on the land. The Appellant's Statement refers to a letter which supports the residential use of the caravan. However, I have not been provided with a copy of that letter.
6. There is no suggestion from the Council that it accepts that a lawful residential use has been established on the appeal site. While the Appellant states planning permission would not be required to site '*any replacement caravan*' on the land, this has not been formally established for example through a Lawful Development Certificate or a relevant planning permission. As things stand, there is no Certificate of Lawfulness in relation to the previous, current or any future caravan nor the residential use of the land. Accordingly, the fallback position proffered by the Appellant carries minimal weight in my decision.

7. I acknowledge, the proposed dwelling would replace an unsightly garage. This structure makes a negative contribution to the setting of the farmhouse. However, that does not in my view justify its removal and replacement with a large family dwelling.
8. I accept that the setting of the farmhouse has already been heavily compromised in recent years by insensitive development such as paved driveways, the aforementioned garage, a swimming pool, boundary treatments and perhaps most significantly the large sprawling caravan park immediately west. Nonetheless, these do not justify further harmful encroachment into the building's setting.
9. While I do not find anything necessarily objectionable about the design approach employed by the Appellant, it is the dwelling's size, scale and footprint, absent the establishment of a credible fallback position that ultimately leads me to conclude it would cause less than substantial harm to the setting of Lidsey Farm House.
10. Paragraph 208 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires me to weigh the identified harm against any public benefits of the proposal. I note that the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. In that context, the delivery of a single residential unit is a matter that weighs in favour of the scheme. However, I do not consider that this alone outweighs the harm I have identified given that the Framework advises that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

D. M. Young

INSPECTOR