



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 April 2024

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24th April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/L3815/D/24/3337594

Beach House, Barn Walk, East Wittering, West Sussex, PO20 8DG

- 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 & Mrs Deane against the decision of Chichester District Council.
 - The application Ref EWB/23/02601/DOM, dated 16 November 2023, was refused by notice dated 11 January 2024.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single-storey side extension, full property renovation, and elevational and boundary wall amendments.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a single-storey side extension, full property renovation, and elevational and boundary wall amendments at Beach House, Barn Walk, East Wittering, West Sussex, PO20 8DG in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref EWB/23/02601/DOM, dated 16 November 2023, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drg Nos 01 C, 02 A, 03, 04, 05 J, 06 G, 07 G, and 08 D.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the walls of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing buildings.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a distinctive, hacienda-style two-storey, detached dwelling with a coastal location. It occupies a corner plot at the end of an eclectic group of properties that face Tamarisk Walk, a public footpath which runs along the foreshore. Beach House has a long return boundary to the east side along Barn Walk, a short stretch of residential no-through road that leads to the sea front. The rear of the plot is occupied by a detached, triple garage

with a pitched roof. The proposals would include the addition of an approximate 16m long, single-storey link between the rear elevation of the dwelling and the garage, together with a new eastern boundary enclosure that would replace a mostly 1.5m high rendered wall with a 2m high timber fence and which would step down to a 900mm high picket fence near and adjacent to the side elevation of the garage. A similar picket fence is proposed to replace the rendered wall to the front boundary along Tamarisk Walk.

4. The Council has acknowledged that it is common within the area for properties to have a link to an outbuilding that lies to the north of the dwelling. The proposed link between the garage, at the foot of the garden, and the dwelling would be deep and somewhat unconventional as a single-storey extension and would unquestionably make a significant change to the built form on the appeal site. But in many ways, it would mimic the local development pattern where others have extended into their rear gardens in this manner. It would not appear out of keeping within the surrounding context.
5. The Council is concerned that the extension would infill an existing visual break between the dwelling and the garage. However, the addition would be set away from the plot's side boundary by over 1m. As such and having regard to its single-storey form and mono-pitched roof, I am satisfied that it would not have an immediately overbearing impact when viewed from the public domain along Barn Walk, and that it would not appear cramped in its setting.
6. Barn Walk has properties to both sides but these are mixed in character and form. Some dwellings sit tighter to the back edge of the pavement than others, and there are no meaningful gaps between most. Although there is an open courtyard space opposite the appeal site within the development at Old Barn Court, this is a functional parking and turning area that is set behind a low-level brick wall and which has little amenity value. In my view, neither this, nor the gap between the garage and dwelling at Beach House has any visual significance. The street scene has no particular rhythm or regimentation and in my assessment any feeling of space is derived by the uninterrupted and increasingly expansive vista over the sea when looking south on the approach from the north end of Barn Walk rather than from any contribution made by gaps between buildings on either side of the road, or from views over back gardens. Nothing in the vista along Barn Walk would change by any significant degree. The extension would be visible but due to its low-rise form and recessed position it would sit contained within its garden setting, neither overly prominent nor intrusive when viewed in the wider context.
7. The new boundary enclosure along Barn Walk would be taller than the existing. However, the proposed fence would be domestic in scale and function. Given the existing mixed character of the street scene, I am satisfied that the combination of solid timber and low-level picket fencing along the eastern boundary would not look out of place. I have carefully considered the fence-line in front of the dwelling's south facing principal elevation. This would partially enclose the dwelling's front garden and would be clearly visible when approaching the site along Tamarisk Walk. However, I saw a mix of boundary treatments to the properties' frontages along the sea front. Some were low level, whilst others were obviously not. Specifically, the opposing corner at 7 Old Barn Court had a tall, fence enclosure to the front. In the opposite direction at Salt Cedar, two-doors away from Beach House, the front garden is bound by a tall, solid wooden fence. Neither appeared to me as incongruous or

out of keeping. Given this context, the proposed east boundary fence at Beach House, and running up to the plot's front corner, would not look out of place or appear intrusive.

8. The combined form of the proposed extension and new boundary fence would clearly alter the existing built form on the appeal site and I accept that there would be a small degree of increased enclosure within the immediate confines of the street scene. But given the mixed nature of the locality, I am satisfied that the change would be assimilated without harm to the wider character or appearance of the area. Accordingly, I find no conflict with Policies 2 or 33 of the Chichester Local Plan: Key Policies 2014-2029 as far as they require new development to respect the character of the surrounding area. For the same reasons there would be no conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework's objectives for achieving well-designed and beautiful places.

Conditions

9. A condition specifying the relevant plans is necessary as this provides certainty. In order to safeguard the character and appearance of the area a condition is required to ensure the walls of the extension are finished in materials to match the existing buildings.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given, in the absence of any other conflict with the development plan, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR