



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 April 2024

by C Rose BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13th May 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/B9506/D/23/3329826

2 New Cottages, Salternshill Lane, Beaulieu, Hampshire SO42 7XE

- 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 Mr G Graham against the decision of New Forest National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref is 23/00759FULL.
 - The development proposed is single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for single storey rear extension at 2 New Cottages, Salternshill Lane, Beaulieu, Hampshire SO42 7XE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 23/00759FULL, 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: Drawing No. PL/02 Revision A Proposed Plans and Elevations and Drawing No. PL/03 Location and Block Plan.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the appeal proposal accords with local policies seeking to limit the scale of extensions to dwellings in order to avoid an imbalance in the range and mix of the housing stock and to protect the locally distinctive character of the New Forest National Park.

Reasons

3. The appeal property comprises one of a pair of semi-detached dwellings located within a fairly secluded rural area predominately surrounded by agricultural land. The proposal comprises a single storey rear extension very similar to that on the adjoining property.
4. Policy DP36 of the New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016-2036 (August 2019) (LP), states that extensions to existing dwellings will be permitted provided they are appropriate to the existing dwelling and its curtilage. The policy also states that in the case of other dwellings (not small dwellings)

outside of the Defined Villages the extension must not increase the floorspace of the existing dwelling by more than 30%. Finally, the Policy states that in exceptional circumstances a larger extension not exceeding 120 square metres may be permitted. The aim of this policy is consistent with Paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework that states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks.

5. There is no dispute between the main parties that the extension is appropriate to the dwelling and its curtilage, the dwelling is not a small dwelling and is located outside of the Defined Villages. I have no reason to disagree. Furthermore, there is no dispute between the parties that the proposal, alongside a previous extension, would exceed the 30% threshold in LP Policy DP36 and no specific exceptional/personal circumstances for the extension are being put forward.
6. With the original floorspace for the dwelling being 99 square metres, a 30% increase would potentially allow extensions of up to 128.7 square metres. The current dwelling as extended measures 118 square metres. The appeal proposal would increase the floorspace to approximately 143 square metres, approximately 14.3 square metres in excess of the 30% maximum permitted under LP Policy DP36.
7. Paragraph 7.79 of the LP clarifies that Policy DP36 relates to concerns that proposals to incrementally extend dwellings in a nationally designated landscape can affect the locally distinctive character of the built environment of the New Forest. It further states that in addition, extensions can over time cause an imbalance in the range and mix of housing stock available.
8. I acknowledge that LP Policy DP36 has been carried forward through successive local plans for the area and that when the LP was adopted in 2019, the Local Plan Inspector endorsed the policy as a useful tool in ensuring that extensions would not cumulatively erode the modest scale and rural character of dwellings. I further acknowledge the stated development pressures in the National Park.
9. However, the proposed extension would be subservient to the main dwelling and only slightly enlarge the existing kitchen and lounge/dining area. There would be no increase in the number of bedrooms, and it would remain a modest sized/scale family house and would not become a substantial property. Evidence from the appellant indicates that the extended appeal property would still sit well below the median averages for property values and sizes in the immediate area. As a result, there is little substantive evidence before me to indicate that the extension, and particularly the additional 14.3 square metres in excess of the 30% policy allowance, would have a significant effect on the value or size of the property that would lead to any harmful imbalance, in the range and mix of housing stock or lead to the loss of a smaller sized dwelling.
10. The small scale of the extension onto an existing patio area similar to the extension to the rear of the neighbouring dwelling would not result in any harmful suburbanising effect or lead to the gradual erosion of the National Park's special character. As such, it would accord with LP Policy SP17.
11. The Authority's refusal reason also relates to concerns regarding the impact of the proposal on activity generally in the countryside. While there would be a

small increase in floorspace, given the size of the resulting dwelling and no increase in bedroom numbers, I find that the proposal would not result in a material increase in activity in the countryside individually or cumulatively.

12. As a result, on balance, it has not been demonstrated that the degree to which the proposal would extend the dwelling would cause an imbalance in the range and mix of housing stock available sufficient to warrant the dismissal of this appeal.
13. It follows from the above that whilst the extension would exceed the floorspace limit in LP Policy DP36, I conclude that the proposal would not affect the balance in the range and mix of housing stock or lead to any harm to the locally distinctive character of this part of the New Forest National Park to which I have given great weight. Accordingly, the proposal would not result in any harm to the aims and objectives of LP policy DP36 and would not conflict with the development plan when read as a whole.

Other Considerations

14. As each application must be considered on its merits, allowing the appeal would not weaken the Authority's ability to conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the National Park when considering other proposals.

Conditions

15. I have had regard to the tests in the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance on the use of planning conditions. In addition to the standard time condition, a condition specifying the relevant plans is necessary for reasons of certainty.
16. A further condition is necessary to ensure that the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling in the interests of the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above the appeal should be allowed.

C Rose

INSPECTOR