



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 April 2024

by N Perrins BSc (Hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3rd June 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/D3830/D/23/3335649

Broadlands, Keymer Road, Burgess Hill, West Sussex RH15 0BG

- 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 Richard Kempson against the decision of the Mid Sussex District Council.
 - The application Ref: DM/23/0207, dated 23 January 2023, was refused by notice dated 3 October 2023.
 - The development proposed is a single storey kitchen and utility extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in December 2023, but there are no material changes relevant to the main issue for this appeal.
3. Amended plans were submitted during the course of the application, which the Council used to make their decision. For the avoidance of doubt I have assessed the appeal based on the amended plans.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the property and surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a large, previously altered semi-detached two story dwelling that is part of a pair with the adjacent property, The Lees. The appeal property is orientated with its frontage facing south and its side elevation fronting Keymer Road. The semi-detached pair is part of a linear run of dwellings with spacious grounds set back from Keymer Road.
6. The appeal proposal comprises a side extension with a crown roof to provide an enlarged kitchen and utility room. The proposal would replace an existing single storey projection albeit with a greater width and depth than the current structure. Materials would be finished to match the host dwelling.
7. The proposed extension would increase the overall width of the dwelling and bring the building line closer to Keymer Road. Whilst the appeal dwelling is of a

substantial size and the proposal in floorspace terms comparatively modest, the proposed extension would appear as a disproportionate addition due to its excessive width. The proposal's width would be exacerbated by the proposed crown roof and flat roof component, and setting back from the frontage that when read together with the overall width of the proposal would appear as an unduly elongated and uncharacteristic addition.

8. I further note that crown roofs are not a prevailing characteristic of the area with the vast majority of dwellings, and associated extensions and outbuildings, using hipped or gabled roofs. Indeed, the host dwelling in this appeal has a hipped and gabled roof structure. Due to the excessive width of the proposal, the proposed crown roof and flat roofed element would be overly prominent and not relate well to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and its roof design.
9. I have also considered the degree to which the proposal complies with the Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Principle DG49 requires extensions to be well-integrated with the existing scale, form and massing allowing the original building to remain the dominant element of the property whether it has one or several additions. Principle DG50 advises that side extensions should normally be subservient to the original dwelling and typically set back from the frontage. Whilst some elements of the SPD are met in this case, I find that the overly wide appearance and use of the uncharacteristic crown roof would not accord with key guidance in the SPD to deliver development that is well-integrated with the original building.
10. The Council further contend that the proposal would harm the street scene by obscuring an important local gap that contributes positively to the spaciousness of the area as it moves from being built up area to the countryside. As observed on my site inspection, the gaps between dwellings and the road have a positive contribution to the spacious feel and character of the area. That said, and as highlighted by the appellant, other developments have been approved nearby within spaces, including the adjacent garage at The Lees. These other developments demonstrate that it is possible to build well designed structures within the spaces between buildings and the roads without harming the overriding spacious character of the area. However, in contrast to the appeal proposal these other examples are proportionate and appropriate buildings within their individual settings.
11. In this case, the excessive width of the proposal would bring the built form closer to the boundary into the existing space with a discordant design that would harm the character and appearance of the street scene. Whilst there is boundary treatment and a backdrop of existing development, the proposal and its disproportionate width and incongruous roof form would still be visible from some public vantage points. I find, therefore, that the proposal is not consistent with Principle DG50 of the SPD in terms of the proposal responding appropriately to the character of the street form.
12. I understand that the existing kitchen is cramped and in need of replacement and the existing lean-to results in heat loss, as well as additional space being needed to meet the appellant's family needs. Whilst I have sympathy for these matters, they do not have sufficient weight to outweigh my concerns with the design of the appeal proposal as less harmful extension options are potentially available given the size of the plot.

13. The Council officer's report identifies that the appeal property has potential to be considered as a non-designated heritage asset. However, the report concludes, in agreement with the Council's Conservation Officer advice, that due to limited information being available and its significance being affected by previous alterations, no objections on heritage grounds could be sustained. In addition, I agree with the Council that the Conservation Officer's advice was not ignored in the assessment of the application. Notwithstanding this, all parties are agreed that heritage is not a matter of dispute in this appeal. Accordingly, I agree with the Council's conclusions on heritage matters made at the application stage that the proposal in this regard complies with Policy DP34 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (the Local Plan) and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.
14. To conclude, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area including street scene due to its width and uncharacteristic crown roof, which would appear as an overly wide development that would not relate well to the host dwelling. Accordingly, the proposal conflicts with Policy DP26 of the Local Plan, which amongst other things requires development to be of high quality design and layout that create a sense of place whilst addressing the scale and character of the surrounding buildings. The proposal is also not consistent with the advice in the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD.
15. The proposal also conflicts with paragraph 135 of the Framework and the National Design Guide, which seek to ensure that developments have a high standard of design appropriate to their site and surrounds.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, the proposal does not accord with the policies of the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations, including the SPD, which indicate planning permission should be allowed. I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

N Perrins

INSPECTOR