



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 November 2024

by V Simpson BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 December 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Y9507/D/24/3345801

Leyfield, Border Close, Hill Brow, Rogate, West Sussex GU33 7QN

- 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 Sarah Chinn against the decision of South Downs National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref is SDNP/23/04778/HOUS.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a part single and part two-storey rear extension with gable projections and dormer windows, the conversion of the existing hipped roofs to both side elevations to gables, including a dormer window to each side together with associated internal and external alterations to the floor plans and elevations.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a part single and part two-storey rear extension with gable projections and dormer windows, the conversion of the existing hipped roofs to both side elevations to gables, including a dormer window to each side together with associated internal and external alterations to the floor plans and elevations, at Leyfield, Border Close, Hill Brow, Rogate, West Sussex GU33 7QN, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref SDNP/23/04778/HOUS, subject to the following conditions.
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing nos; 1495/01A, 002A, 004E, 005C, 006A, 007C, 008D, 009E, 010C, and 011B.
 - 3) The external materials of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing dwelling.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs has been made by Ms Sarah Chinn against the South Downs National Park Authority. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. The address of the appeal site is variously given as Leyfield and Layfield. For clarity and for the purposes of this decision it is referred to as Leyfield.
4. The appeal site is within the South Downs National Park. As such, I have a duty to have regard to the purposes of the National Park. These are;

conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park; and, promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public. This duty is applied in the determination of this appeal.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. A relatively large and attractive house with accommodation over 2 storeys, as well as associated outbuildings and sizable gardens occupy the appeal site. The house has a relatively complex and varied roof structure incorporating both hipped and non-hipped gables, as well as a first-floor triple casement dormer window. Hedges, trees, and substantial plant growth within and/or close to most of the site boundaries, create a sense of seclusion and relative tranquillity within the site. This is despite the presence of neighbouring residential properties, a car showroom, and a vehicle repair/service centre.
7. Policy SD31 of the South Downs National Park Authority – South Downs Local Plan – adopted 2 July 2019 (the Local Plan), relates to extensions to existing dwellings and the provision of annexes and outbuildings. While this policy indicates that extensions to dwellings will be permitted where, amongst other things, the proposal would not increase the floorspace of the existing dwelling by more than approximately 30% unless there are exceptional circumstances, it does not forbid larger increases. However, within the supporting text it is indicated that the policy purpose is to avoid the over-extension of existing dwellings and the adverse impact that this has on the character and appearance of settlements and the countryside.
8. The development would result in both upward and outward expansions of the house, and the internal floorspace of the dwelling would increase by a little more than 30%. Nevertheless, the proposed extensions and alterations would include; a complex roof structure including hipped roof gables; lead-roofed dormer windows, and hanging clay wall tiles. The development would also incorporate features such as multipaned steel casement windows, brick 'skirts', and clay roof tiles - all of which are found in the host dwelling and contribute positively to its distinctiveness. As such, and despite its increased size, the resultant dwelling would retain a similar character and style to the existing property, and it would continue to be of a high quality design.
9. Given that the house sits within a large plot, the extensions and alterations would not lead to it appearing cramped within the site. Furthermore, and due to the enclosure afforded by plant growth close to the site boundaries, and the presence of the large nearby car sales and vehicle repair centre buildings, the enlarged dwelling would not be dominant within the local landscape. The proposed retention of trees, shrubs, and plants would also prevent the development from having a harmful urbanising effect.
10. The appeal scheme is for proposed extensions and alterations to an existing dwelling. As such, it would not lead to any harmful reduction in the sense of relative tranquillity in the area. Furthermore, because there would be no intensification in the use of the site, and no rooflights are proposed, the

development would not have a harmful effect on the quality of the dark skies in the area. Moreover, and for the reasons previously given, the development would also preserve the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park. As such, and while there is no compelling evidence from which to conclude that the development would promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area, it would not conflict with the purposes of the National Park.

11. In light of the above considerations, the development would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, and in respect of this main issue, it would comply with policies SD1, SD4, SD5, SD7, SD8, and SD31 of the Local Plan. Collectively, and amongst other things these policies require development to be of a sensitive and high quality of design which reflects the context and type of landscape in which the development is located; and which conserves and enhances relative tranquillity and the intrinsic quality of dark night skies. These policies also require development to respect the character of the local area.

Conditions

12. The statutory condition which specifies the time-period for the implementation of the development is imposed. For certainty, a plans condition is also added, identifying the plans to which the permission relates. A condition requiring the use of matching materials is also imposed to protect the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above and having regard to the development plan as a whole and any other material considerations, I conclude that this appeal should be allowed.

V Simpson

INSPECTOR