



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 December 2024

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M1710/D/24/3353120

Stone Place, Headley Lane, Passfield, Liphook GU30 7RX

- 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 David Bell against the decision of East Hampshire District Council.
 - The application Ref. is 22765/003.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey rear / side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for a two-storey rear / side extension at Stone Place, Headley Lane, Passfield, Liphook GU30 7RX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. 22765/003, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions in the attached Schedule.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings.

Reasons

3. From my visit to the appeal site, I saw that Stone Place is a two-storey detached cottage sited perpendicular to a verdant and narrow country lane and with its western elevation positioned tight to the highway verge. To the south is an attached rear outbuilding, with its stone rear wall and pitched roof providing pleasing enclosure to this part of Headley Lane.
4. In the front and parallel to the lane, a hedge set inside the low stone boundary wall for the most part screens the ground floor element of the cottage, the front garden and driveway, although a gap between this hedge and the cottage permits views of the garage projecting forwards of the cottage. This garage and the attached outbuildings to the rear are of poor quality. The garage in particular is visually poor and in my view is the logical choice for the location of the main part of the additions to the existing dwelling, as indeed is proposed in the appeal scheme.
5. The appellant and the Council have two very different approaches to the extension of Stone Cottage. The Council favours a 'replication' or pastiche design in the form of a linear extension of modest size at the eastern end of the building and with a noticeably lower ridge, but otherwise wholly in keeping with the appearance of the original dwelling. However, I consider that such an extension would be significantly constrained, both as regards the perpetuation

- of existing inadequate internal ceiling heights and in respect of not providing the increased living space required for the appellant's family.
6. The alternative approach, as shown in the appeal proposal, is an example of 'assertive contrast' and is for an extension of more contemporary design that does not copy the host building but nonetheless has features and materials that either match or empathise with it. Such an innovative approach would fall within the ambit of paragraph 139 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework' as revised in December 2024). This well-established concept is by no means unusual in additions to buildings of a traditional design, including listed buildings, but in order to be successful the circumstances of the site's location need to be appropriate.
 7. For example, in situations where a number of local vernacular or listed buildings are in close proximity and form a group composition, this design concept may prove difficult if not impossible to achieve to an extent where extensions are harmonious with their host building and adjacent buildings. Indeed, the differences may draw the eye and be perceived negatively, or at least as somewhat incongruous.
 8. However, in this appeal Stone Cottage is in a large plot with its western boundary to Headley Lane as described above and fields in open countryside on the other three boundaries. Also to the west, the lane and the dense tree screen preclude the extension (which is on the eastern side of Stone Cottage) from having any effect on the listed buildings at Passfield Farm and The Oasts. The development would therefore have no impact on heritage assets, either designated or non-designated.
 9. In addition, this freestanding position of Stone Cottage means that the constraints on any proposed additions do not go beyond the site other than the overall need to have regard to and respect the local character of the area. The main consideration is for the extension to be sympathetic in scale, design and external materials to the host building, albeit in this instance within the somewhat wider scope of the aforementioned design approach of assertive contrast. The appellant argues that this was recognised at the 'Pre-app' stage and amendments were made to meet some of the Council's comments.
 10. Moreover, the principle of this design choice is in this case strengthened by the extension replacing the unsightly garage and being at 90 degrees to the existing building, thereby creating a courtyard effect. This allows the cottage to be read in conjunction with the new and different addition, but still be seen largely intact in its existing traditional form. The exception to this is the removal of the front door, but although this is regrettable I accept its relocation is functionally necessary. And in the event, as Stone Cottage is not listed permission is not required.
 11. As regards scale, although larger than the Council would wish, the extension would have a ridge and eaves line slightly lower than the existing building and the roof would have a matching pitch, sloping away in views from the Lane. The external materials would include matching stone, timber cladding and slate that are already in evidence in this part of rural Hampshire. On the front (north) and west elevations, stonework would predominate and together with some timber cladding this would help to visually link the extension to the original building in the aspect from the public realm of Headley Lane. The more contemporary and extensively glazed south (rear) and east elevations of the

extension including a balcony would face the open countryside and would not be in public view.

12. Overall, I consider the design to be of a high quality and sympathetic to Stone Cottage and its rural surroundings, with a particular benefit being the removal of the prominent and unsightly garage. The proposal would not be entirely in accordance with the Council's Residential Extensions and Householder Developments SPD 2018, but it would be acceptable as regards Section 12: 'Achieving Well-Designed Places' of the Framework. Nor in my view would there be harmful conflict with Policy CP29 of the East Hampshire District Council ('EHDC') Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy 2014; Policy HE2 of the EHDC Local Plan: Second Review 2006 and (at the time the appeal was lodged) the still emerging Policy BL3 of the Bramshott and Liphook Neighbourhood Plan.

Conclusion and Conditions

13. For the reasons explained above I shall allow the appeal. A condition requiring the Council's prior approval of the external materials is needed to ensure that the extension, notwithstanding its different design, reads positively with the host building. A condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans is needed for the avoidance of doubt and is in the interests of proper planning. Finally, a condition restricting permitted development rights will safeguard the appearance of the dwelling and its immediate setting.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this Decision;
- 2) Details (including samples if requested) of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority;
- 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing No. Series 927/: Plan Nos. A3/101 Rev. D; A3/130 Rev. A; A3/131 Rev. A; A3/105 Rev. B; A3/110 Rev. B; A3/111 Rev. A; A3/305 Rev. E; A3/310 Rev. H; A3/311 Rev. G; A3/312 Rev. E; A3/330 Rev. H; A3/331 Rev. H;
- 4) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking, re-enacting or modifying that Order) no extensions and outbuildings otherwise permitted under Schedule 2, Part 1 Class(es) A, AA, B, C, D and E of the said Order shall be carried out on the dwellinghouse or within its curtilage without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.