



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 May 2025

by **J E Jolly BA (Hons) MA MSc MCIH MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28th May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Y9507/D/24/3354257

Great Drove Farm, Bostal Road, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3PD

- 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 and Mrs G Woolcott against the decision of South Downs National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref is SDNP/24/01998/HOUS.
 - The development proposed is for the demolition of existing conservatory and the erection of single-storey extensions to dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for the demolition of existing conservatory and the erection of single-storey extensions to dwelling at Great Drove Farm, Bostal Road, Steyning, West Sussex BN44 3PD in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref SDNP/24/01998/HOUS, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions in Annex A.

Preliminary Matters

2. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was revised in December 2024. However, I am satisfied that any changes to the Framework have not prejudiced any party in this case.
3. For clarity and certainty, the name of the host dwelling has changed from 'Great Drove Farm' to 'Weald View'. However, for the purposes of this decision and as per the addressed stated on the Council's decision notice, the host dwelling is referred to as 'Great Drove Farm'.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the supply of small to medium sized dwellings in the South Downs National Park (SDNP)

Reasons

5. Great Drove Farm is located in the SDNP and accessed via a private roadway found to the northern side of Bostal Road near to the junction with Newham Lane. The host dwelling is a 3 bedroomed, single storey detached bungalow with a conservatory and a patio garden to the western side.

6. The proposal is to demolish the conservatory and to construct extensions to the east and western sides of the property that would result in a 4-bed dwelling with a study and kitchen/dining/living area.
7. Policy SD31 of the South Downs Local Plan, 2019 (SDLP) says that development proposals for extensions to existing dwellings will be permitted where the proposal does not increase the floorspace of the existing dwelling by more than approximately 30% unless there are exceptional circumstances. Further that the proposal must respect the established character of the local area; and would not be overbearing or of a form which would be detrimental to the amenity of nearby residents by virtue of loss of light and/or privacy.
8. The main parties agree that the proposal would respect the established character of the area and that it would not harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers through loss of light or privacy. I find no reason to disagree.
9. However, the submitted drawings show that the proposed development would increase the total floor space of the property by more than 30%. Consequently, the Council contend that the host dwelling would no longer contribute to the limited supply of small to medium dwellings within the SDNP.
10. There can be no doubt that the proposed extensions would increase the overall floor space of the host dwelling by a significant amount, in part to include the addition of a kitchen/living/dining space and a study commensurate with modern living and homeworking. However, consideration of whether a development is 'materially larger' is not restricted solely to floorspace. There are other considerations which depend on the circumstances of the case. As such, given that there is no adopted definition of a medium sized dwelling in the SDLP, to my mind even though the extended dwelling would have 4 bedrooms rather than 3, it would still be a medium sized family property, albeit it would likely to be at the higher end of a 'typical' definition for this type of dwelling.
11. Consequently, in this very specific case, and in the planning judgement, the proposal would meet the aims of Policy SD31 of the SDLP, which allows for exceptional circumstances for extension in excess of 30% of the original floor space, provided the proposed development respects the character of the area and there is no detriment to the amenity of nearby residents.

Conditions

12. I have considered Paragraph 56 of the Framework and the national Planning Practice Guidance and imposed the following conditions for certainty; a standard time condition, a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. Conditions related to roof lights and external materials are required to ensure that the development would conserve and enhance the intrinsic quality of dark night skies and the integrity of the Dark Sky Core in the SDNP and the established character of the area.
13. There is also a condition related to hard and soft landscaping to protect the landscape character of the area. It is necessary to include a condition for a scheme of ecological enhancements to conserve and enhance biodiversity on the site.

14. In addition, there is a condition for the removal of permitted development rights. This is to ensure that future development of the site respects the identity and character of the built form, landscape character and neighbouring amenity and to enable the Council authority to regulate and control the development of land in the SDNP.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, the appeal should succeed, and planning permission be granted, subject to the conditions set out in Annex A.

J E Jolly

INSPECTOR

Annex A: Conditions:

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The external materials of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing dwelling.
- 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings:
 - Drawing No 1 - Existing elevations and floor plan
 - Drawing No 2 - Location and site plan and existing roof plan
 - Drawing No 3 - Existing garden/roof plan
 - Drawing No 4 - Proposed extensions (floor plan)
 - Drawing No 5 - Proposed elevations
 - Drawing No 6 - Proposed elevations and roof plan
 - Drawing No 7 - Proposed west and east extensions
- 4) No development shall commence until a scheme of hard and soft landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The scheme shall include details of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land. The measures for the protection of the trees to be retained as outlined in the submitted Tree Constraints and Tree Protection Plans (Duckworths Arboriculture Ltd, May 2024) shall be implemented. The works on site shall then proceed fully in accordance with the recommendations of the Tree Constraints and Tree Protection Plans. In addition, the scheme shall identify those to be retained, and the details of six replacement native trees; and set out measures for their protection throughout the course of development. Any trees or plants which within a period of 10 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.
- 5) Prior to development above slab level, a scheme of ecological and ecosystems services enhancements shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The approved scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter.
- 6) The extensions hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the rooflights have been fitted with obscured or low transmittance glazing designed to reduce the escape of light. Details of the type of obscured/low transmittance glazing shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council before the windows are installed and once installed the obscured glazing shall be retained thereafter.
- 7) Notwithstanding the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no buildings, structures or works as defined within Part 1 of Schedule 2, Class E inclusive of that Order, shall be erected or undertaken on the site unless permission is granted by the Council pursuant to an application for the purpose.

*****End*****