



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 August 2025

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C1435/D/25/3368248

6 Carriage Mews, Church Lane, Ripe, BN8 6EX

- 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 Mrs S Collins against the decision of Wealden District Council.
 - The application Ref is WD/2024/2938/F.
 - The development proposed is described as amendment to approval WD/2023/3009 to provide pair of opening in doors in lieu of window with iron safety balustrade.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for an amendment to approval WD/2023/3009 to provide pair of opening in doors in lieu of window with iron safety balustrade at 6 Carriage Mews, Church Lane, Ripe, BN8 6EX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref WD/2024/2938/F, 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 materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans, drawings numbered: 24.12.13.002, 003, 004, 005, 006, 007, 008, 009, 010, 011, 012, 013, 014, 015 and 016.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mrs S Collins against Wealden District Council and this will be the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issue

3. I consider the main issue to be whether the works would serve to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Ripe Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property, 6 Carriage Mews (No 6) is a detached two-storey dwelling. It is located in a small relatively recent modern development of six semi-detached and detached properties on the edge of the village core but within the Ripe Conservation Area.

5. No 6 is located on a corner plot where the public footpath, which runs along the south-east boundary of the property, meets Church Lane. The south-eastern boundary is formed by a relatively tall dense hedge. As I observed, there are currently, albeit limited due to the height and maturity of the boundary hedge, limited views of the rear of the property from the footpath.
6. The properties within the mews are vernacular in form and constructed from a pallet of traditional materials. Nevertheless, due to their architectural detailing, they are clearly contemporary in style and make a positive contribution to the conservation area.
7. The appellant proposes the construction of a dormer located in the rear roof slope of a lower section of roof over bedroom 1. The dormer would be glazed with a pair of inward opening French doors complete with a metal balustrade, in the style of a Juliet balcony.
8. There is an extant planning permission Ref: WD/2023/3009/F for a rear dormer, identical in form and location to that proposed here. However, that previously approved dormer has a double-casement window reflecting the style, proportions and height of the existing first floor windows in the rear elevation. The essential difference between the approved dormer and this one would be the depth and style of the glazing, and the introduction of a metal balustrade.
9. I agree with the Council that the introduction of full height glazing at first floor level along with the proposed balustrade would introduce a new contrasting feature here. However, given the overall contemporary styling of the dwellings, I am not persuaded that it would appear, as suggested, as an incongruous feature. In my judgement, the dormer as designed would add visual interest to the rear elevation by breaking up the overall mass of vertical tile hanging, and what I found to be the rather bland and regimented appearance of the existing fenestration pattern of the rear elevation at first floor level.
10. I conclude therefore that the proposed development would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the host property, the mews, or the character and appearance of the conservation area, and would in a small but nevertheless material way enhance it. The proposal would therefore accord with the objectives of Saved Policies EN8, EN19 and DC19 of the Wealden Local Plan (Adopted December 1998); Policies SPO1, SPO2 and SPO13 and Policy WCS14 of the adopted Wealden District (Incorporating Part of the South Downs National Park) Core Strategy Local Plan (Adopted February 2013); and the National Planning Policy Framework 2024, as they relate to the quality of development, and the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Conditions

11. I have considered the conditions suggested by the Council in light of the advice in the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance. In the interests of precision and enforceability, I have amended the Council's suggested wording where appropriate.
12. To ensure a high quality development, I shall include a condition about the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development.

13. In the interests of certainty, I shall also impose a condition requiring the development to be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans.

Conclusion

14. Accordingly, for the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR