



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 August 2022

by Rebecca Thomas MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 October 2022.

Appeal Ref: APP/B9506/D/22/3301462

Trelawne, Harrow Road, Neacroft, Bransgore, Christchurch BH23 8JW

- 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 M Heathman against the decision of New Forest National Park.
 - The application Ref 21/01084, dated 16 December 2021, was refused by notice dated 27 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is Single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I have taken the description of development from the planning application form and appeal form, though this varies from that on the decision notice. I have used this description of development as there is no evidence that this change has been agreed. Moreover, the description used by the Authority includes the addition of a ground floor window to the existing dwelling. I consider that this would not require planning permission and is not disputed between the parties and as such I have considered the appeal proposals on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposed extension meets the Authority's strategy for the extension of existing dwellings within the New Forest National Park ('National Park') in the context of adopted policy.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is one of a pair of semi-detached dwellings located in a small rural settlement, set in a row of dwellings on Harrow Road, within the National Park. The proposal is to construct a single storey rear extension which would wrap around the side and rear elevations of the existing house. The rear extension would meet the extent of the rear wall of the adjoining property, known as Glamaig. The parties state that the extension would result in an additional floorspace of between 23.65 and 26.5 square metres.
5. Policy DP36 of the Local Plan¹ seeks to limit the cumulative size of additions to dwellings in order to safeguard the locally distinctive character of the National Park and ensure the maintenance of a balance of housing stock. Policy DP36

¹ New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016-2036 (August 2019)

confirms that extensions to existing dwellings will be permitted provided that they are appropriate to the existing dwelling and its curtilage. For small dwellings, the extension must not result in a total internal habitable floorspace exceeding 100 square metres. In the case of all other dwellings which do not fall within this category, and outside 'Defined Villages', the extension must not increase the floorspace of the existing dwelling by more than 30%.

6. The explanatory text to Policy DP36 goes on to confirm the definitions for the purposes of calculating sizes of the original dwelling and extensions, including to confirm that a 'small dwelling' has a floor area of 80 square metres or less as it existed on 1 July 1982, or as it was originally built or legally established after that date.
7. The parties agree that the dwelling is located in a rural area outside the Defined Villages. The appellant asserts that the dwelling is 80.3 square metres, whereas the Authority considers that the original floorspace is 79.31 square metres. Notwithstanding these discrepancies, the proposed development would result in a cumulative extension to the original of between 42-46% or a total resultant floorspace of between 114-116 square metres. Whether or not the property would be classified as a small dwelling, these figures would exceed the limits of 30% or 100 square metres as set out in DP36 and as such the proposal contrary to this policy.
8. I accept that the extension is appropriate to the existing dwelling and its curtilage, remains subservient and the design is complementary and sympathetic to the character and appearance of the host dwelling. Even so, these matters do not overcome or outweigh the direct conflict with Policy DP36 and its aims to protect the National Park and the balance of housing stock.

Other Matters

9. The appellant states that the development would be identical to that at the adjoining property. Additionally, the appellant asserts that there are a number of appeal decisions where extensions have been permitted which exceed the limits set out by Policy DP36. The circumstances in each proposal are likely to be different, and in any event the fact that apparently similar development has been granted permission is not a reason, on its own, to allow unacceptable development. I have considered this appeal proposal on its own merits and concluded that it would cause harm for the reasons set out above.
10. I accept that there would be no harm to neighbouring occupiers as a result of overbearing, loss of privacy or loss of daylight or sunlight, nonetheless this does not overcome the conflict with policy found above.
11. I note that there were no objections from neighbours nor the Parish Council, however support or a lack of objection to a scheme is not a reason in itself to allow development.
12. I accept that the appeal property would still remain relatively modest in size and the proposal would improve the living arrangements by providing additional dining space especially for visiting family. Whilst I appreciate the appellant's desire to provide living space more suitable to their needs as well as provide a more energy efficient dwelling, it has not been shown that this is the only way of achieving the appellants' aims of providing additional space and increased energy performance. Therefore, I give this matter limited weight.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal be dismissed.

Rebecca Thomas

INSPECTOR