



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2023

by Lynne Evans BA MA MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15th February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/B9506/D/22/3306778

Brackenfields, Southampton Road, Boldre SO41 8ND

- 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 Deadman against the decision of New Forest National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref:22/00046 dated 20 January 2022, was refused by notice dated 24 August 2022.
 - The development proposed is extension to house; demolition of conservatory.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - a) whether the proposed extension of the dwelling is acceptable, taking into account any previous extensions, as regards development plan policy which seeks to safeguard the distinctive character and appearance of the New Forest National Park and maintain a balance in the housing stock within it, whilst also taking account all other material considerations and
 - b) the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing property and on the local area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached house on a large plot on the west side of Southampton Road (A337) and within the countryside outside of any of the defined settlements.
4. The proposal would remove an existing conservatory and build a new single storey extension for an extension to the kitchen and extend the existing garage to create a larger garage with accommodation above. Policy DP36 of the New Forest National Park Local Plan (Local Plan) sets out a limit of 30% for extensions to an existing dwelling, which is defined as it existed on 1 July 1982 (or as originally built or legally established if later than 1 July 1982). The supporting text explains that the objective of the policy is twofold; one to ensure that incremental extensions do not affect the locally distinctive character of the built environment of the New Forest and secondly, to seek to maintain a balance in the range and mix of housing stock available. The

National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) confirms at paragraph 176 that great weight should be given to enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks.... which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.

5. There is disagreement between the Appellant and the Council over the floorspace calculations and in particular whether the existing and proposed garage should be included or excluded from the calculations. Taking an arithmetic approach and following the guidance in the Council's supporting text to Policy DP36 of the Local Plan as well as its Planning Information Leaflet – Extensions to dwellings and replacement dwellings (January 2022), an attached outbuilding such as a garage would not be included in the calculation of the existing floorspace. In terms of the proposed garage, the note sets out when they might be excluded from the floorspace calculations, but it seems to me on the limited evidence before me that the proposed garage would fail to comply in two regards; an internal connection is still shown through to the house and the ground floor element is not shown solely for use as a garage but also shows the inclusion of a sauna. Given that the ground floor of the attached garage is being shown for more than just a garage use, I agree with the Council that without further changes, it would be difficult to impose a condition to restrict to garage use only.
6. On this basis I concur with the calculations produced by the Council that indicates that the extensions would result in a 41% increase over the existing and therefore would be in excess of the 30% increase set out under Policy DP36 of the Local Plan. There is no detailed evidence before me regarding whether the proposed extension would materially affect the balance in the range and mix of housing stock. However, the scale and massing of the proposed garage extension, which I address in more detail under my second issue below, would be a bulky addition to the existing dwelling which would have a harmful effect on the locally distinctive character of the built environment of the New Forest.
7. I therefore find that the proposal would not be acceptable, as regards development plan policy which seeks to safeguard the distinctive character and appearance of the New Forest National Park and maintain a balance in the housing stock within it, by setting a limit on the scale of increase in floorspace of proposed extensions. It conflicts with both Policy DP36 and Policy SP17 of the Local Plan in this regard.

Issue b) Character and Appearance

8. The proposed single storey extension would be modest in terms of its scale and proportions and well designed to be in keeping with the existing design and form of the property. Furthermore, I consider that the removal of the existing conservatory would be beneficial in order for the form and design of the property to be better appreciated and in particular the attractive bay window facing onto the main garden.
9. In terms of the proposed garage extension with accommodation above, this would be a large and bulky addition to the existing house. Although set down from the main roof ridge, the proportions of the roof in terms of its ridge length and eaves line would present an over large roof in relation to the form and proportions of the existing roof to the main house. The dormer windows to the east and west elevation would also be out of scale and proportion to the

existing pattern of fenestration. Taken all together, the extension would relate poorly to the existing house and would be a visually discordant and overbearing addition.

10. With the re-siting of the access to the property, and the infilling of the existing access, I agree that there are only glimpsed views of the house from the road, but nonetheless in such views, the proposed two storey extension would be an uncomfortable and overly prominent addition to the house.
11. I therefore conclude that the proposed garage extension with accommodation over would not respect the character and appearance of the existing property and of the local area. It would conflict with Policies SP17, DP2 and DP18 of the Local Plan, the Council's Design Guide SPD and the Boldre Parish Design Statement SPD as well as the Framework and in particular Sections 12 and 15, all of which, amongst other matters, seek a high quality of design which respects the local context including the local distinctiveness of the National Park.

Other Considerations

12. The Appellant has drawn my attention to two appeals where, in each case an extension to an existing dwelling was allowed, and similar policy issues arose to those addressed under my first issue (Ref: APP/B9506/D/18/3197383 and APP/B9506/D/20/3255112). It is a fundamental planning principle that each proposal must be judged on its individual planning merits which is the basis of my decision in this case. Nonetheless I have taken them into consideration in so far as I am able on the information provided, but I do not consider that the proposals are directly comparable with the proposal before me, and they do not persuade me to a different view, particularly given the harm I have concluded under both my main issues.

Conclusion

13. I have found that the proposed development would conflict with Policies DP36, SP17, DP2 and DP18 of the Local Plan and other guidance as well as the Framework. Even if the Appellant were able to persuade me in respect of the scale of the increase in floorspace as set out under Policy DP36, this would not override the harm I have concluded to the character and appearance of the existing property and local area under my second main issue.
14. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

L J Evans

INSPECTOR