



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: 2nd March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/B9506/D/22/3307317

Longacres, Bashley Common Road, New Milton, BH25 5SF

- 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 Prime Oak Ltd (Miss Molly Wright) against the decision of New Forest National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref: 22/00074 dated 1 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 July 2022.
 - The development proposed is erection of single storey, oak framed orangery to rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is whether the proposed extension in relation to the cumulative enlargement of the dwelling is 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, whilst also taking account of all other material considerations.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached house on a large plot, with further extensive land holdings in the same ownership. It is on the east side of Bashley Common Road (B3058), within a loose group of dwellings of different sizes on both sides of the road. It lies within the countryside, and outside of any of the defined settlements.
4. The proposal would construct a rear extension described as an orangery, with brick elevations and extensive glazing, with a flat roof and two lantern rooflights. It would be a sizeable extension extending, on the basis of the submitted plans, some 7.83 metres across the rear elevation with a depth varying between 5.22m and 4.0m.
5. 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.

6. Although there is disagreement over the precise figures, the Council and Appellant agree that the property was extended with a sizeable addition in 1988 which approximately doubled the floorspace of the property. This proposal would add further to the size of the property resulting in an overall increase since 1982 of around 130%, depending on the figures used by the Council and the Appellant. I do not consider it necessary to analyse the figures in further detail as there is no disagreement over the order of increase in size, in terms of comparing the property as of 1982; with the extension granted permission in 1988 and the proposed extension.
7. On the basis of the figures, and the resultant scale of increase over the size of the property as of 1982, it is clear that the proposal would not be in accordance with Policy DP36 of the Local Plan. I recognise that it is already a large house on a generous sized plot but it would still result in an even larger house given the scale and proportions of the proposed extension, although I have insufficient information before me to address whether the further addition would materially affect the range and mix of housing stock available. However, the Appellant's case appears in part to be a criticism of the policy objectives and content, suggesting that once a house is large or over a certain value it is unlikely to result in a further imbalance in the range and mix of housing stock available. I do not have the evidence before me to conclude on this matter and, furthermore, these are arguments that would more properly need to be debated at a future Local Plan review, assuming the same or a similar policy was proposed.
8. I agree that the proposed extension would not be seen from the road but it would be a further incremental increase on the size of the property and would therefore not meet the objectives of the policy to protect through limiting cumulative and incremental increases to properties, the locally distinctive character of the built environment of the New Forest.
9. The Appellant has referenced an appeal decision where permission was granted for an extension, albeit that the property had already exceeded the floorspace increase as a result of earlier permissions (Appeal Ref: APP/B9506/D/21/3288303). It is a fundamental planning objective that each decision must be considered on its planning merits. Nonetheless, I have taken that decision into account in my decision, so far as the information has been made available to me. Whilst referencing the same policy, it does not seem to me that the proposal was identical, particularly in its size and form, with the proposal before me.
10. It is my view that there are no material considerations in this particular case which would justify me making a decision other than in accordance with development plan policy. Accordingly, I conclude that the proposed extension in relation to the cumulative enlargement of the dwelling would not be acceptable and would conflict with Policy DP36 and Policy SP17 of the Local Plan, which seek, through limiting the size of extensions to existing properties,

to safeguard the distinctive character and appearance of the New Forest National Park and maintain a balance in the housing stock within it.

Conclusion

11. 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