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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 October 2024 by R Dickson BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

### **Decision by Mr A Spencer-Peet BSc(Hons) PGDip.LP Solicitor (Non Practising)**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

**Decision date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024**

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### **Appeal Ref: APP/B9506/D/24/3349553**

### **Beechwood House, Royden Lane, Boldre, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 8PE**

- 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 Neil Fletcher against the decision of New Forest National Park Authority.
  - The application Ref is 24/00455FULL.
  - The development proposed is retention of orangery, with link to existing annexe (Single-storey extension; link to existing annexe).
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### **Decision**

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for retention of orangery, with link to existing annexe (Single-storey extension; link to existing annexe) at Beechwood House, Royden Lane, Boldre, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 8PE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24/00455FULL, subject to the following condition:
  - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be retained in accordance with drawing numbers: DR1 Location Plan, DR3 Site Plan, 002 Ground floor plan – Proposed, 024 First floor plan – Proposed, 025 Roof plan – Proposed, 028 Right side elevation – Proposed, 029 Rear elevation – Proposed, 030A Left side elevation – Proposed, 031 Elevation X-Y – Proposed, DSL0041 Left side elevation – Inset.

### **Appeal Procedure**

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

### **Preliminary Matters**

3. The description of development above is taken from the application form and decision notice, but the appeal only relates to the link element, connecting the orangery to the outbuilding/annexe. The orangery was granted planning permission in 2021. The link appears to have been built in accordance with the submitted plans. I have considered the scheme accordingly.

### **Main Issue**

4. The main issue is whether the proposed development complies with local policies which seek to limit the scale of extensions to dwellings, with particular regard to the effect of the proposed development on the locally distinctive

character of the built environment of the New Forest National Park (NP) and the range and mix of housing stock available.

### **Reasons for the Recommendation**

5. Policy DP36 of the New Forest National Park Local Plan 2019 (LP) sets out a 30% limitation on the increase of floor space, measured cumulatively with any previous enlargements to the dwelling since 1 July 1982. This safeguards against cumulative and incremental increases in the above-mentioned interest. Taking into account the previous alterations, the increase in floor space would be over the 30% limit. This is not disputed. The link element allows access from the main dwelling into the annexe, and does not provide much additional floorspace in comparison to the rest of the dwelling.
6. The 30% limit set by Policy DP36 aims to prevent cumulative increases in floor area, and the supporting text for the policy sets out that it protects the NP in two ways. Firstly, it aims to prevent an imbalance to the overall housing stock through the loss of smaller sized dwellings. Secondly, it seeks to protect the locally distinctive character of the built environment within the NP.
7. During my site visit, it was evident that the annexe is used as a space by visitors, and is separated from the orangery by a lockable door. The proposal would link the annexe to the habitable floor space of the host dwelling. However, the evidence submitted identifies that its use would continue as separate guest accommodation and would remain so irrespective of whether it is linked to the dwelling or not. There is no suggestion that the annexe, whether detached or attached to the host dwelling, would not or could not continue to be used as ancillary accommodation.
8. Furthermore, the appellant has provided marketing information for the property, which identifies the appeal property as not contributing towards the housing stock of smaller affordable housing within the NP. That being said, it still contributes to the range and mix of housing stock, albeit at the upper end of the scale. The evidence provided suggests that the link would not significantly alter either the size, or value of the appeal site to such an extent that it would alter the position of housing stock in the NP. Therefore, the proposed development would not lead to any imbalance in the range and mix of housing stock nor lead to the loss of a smaller sized dwelling.
9. The second aim for policy DP36 identifies that incremental extensions can affect the locally distinctive character of the built environment within the NP. The link element cannot be seen from the road, and is not easily seen when approaching the dwelling from the private driveway. It is constructed from the same materials as the orangery, which the Council found to be acceptable when it was permitted.
10. Policy SP17 reinforces the need to resist the gradual suburbanising effect within the NP. The main parties agree that in design terms the orangery does not result in visual harm. I have not been provided with any substantive evidence from the Council as to why the addition of the link would erode the NPs character any more so. The link element cannot be seen from any public areas. Even in more private areas of the property, it is difficult to see that these are linked. Consequently, the proposal would not conflict with Policy SP17 of the LP in so far as the proposal would not erode the NP's local character, nor would result in a gradual suburbanising effect within the NP.

11. Furthermore, whilst the proposed link to the annexe would result in conflict with the 30% limitation on the increase of floor space as set out within Policy DP36 of the LP, the proposal would accord with the policy aims to protect the range and mix of housing stock and retain the locally distinctive character of the NP. In light of the additional information provided by the appellant and given that there does not appear to be any suggestion that the existing annexe could not continue to be used as ancillary accommodation irrespective of whether it was attached or detached from the host dwelling, sufficiently compelling evidence has been provided which indicates that a departure from the strict limitations on the growth of dwellings within the NP would be acceptable in the specific circumstances of this appeal.

### **Conditions**

12. I have recommended a condition specifying the approved plans to provide certainty and in the interests of proper planning. I have not included the standard time limit condition, as the link is already in place and appears to have been completed in accordance with the plans.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

13. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted subject to the recommended condition above.

*R Dickson*

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

### **Inspector's Decision**

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is allowed subject to the stated condition.

*Mr A Spencer-Peet*

INSPECTOR