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**P L A N N I N G**

25 High Street

Findon

West Sussex.

Design and Access Statement

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Ecosystems Statement

**Context**

25 High Street (No.25) is located within the defined built- up area of Findon. The property comprises a semi-detached bungalow situated within a row of six semi-detached bungalows, five of which have loft conversions of various sizes and which include a range of roof lights and dormer extensions.

**Proposal**

The proposal is to demolish the existing rear extension; square off the rear elevation; and to convert part of the loft to habitable accommodation, including a flat roofed dormer extension.

**Background**

The attached dwelling (No.27) has been extensively extended to the side and rear. Its rear elevation is dominant within the rear garden of No.25 and the rear conservatory at No.25 is totally out of keeping with the existing rear elevation of No.27.

The applicants have two young children, a boy and a girl, who presently share a bedroom. The dwelling has just two bedrooms. The applicants need a further bedroom so that their children can have a bedroom each. They would also like to open up their communal space, which is split into small rooms and areas.

In 2013 SDNP Authority granted planning permission for a full width single storey rear extension, which squared off the rear elevation and a loft conversion. The loft conversion included two flat roofed dormers and roof light on the rear elevation and four roof lights on the front roof slope. The extension also included a hip to gable extension. The application was assessed in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2012, Circular 2010, the purposes and duty of the SDNP, Policies ARGN2, ARGN7 and ARDV19 of the South Downs Partnership Management Plan adopted December 2013 and Policy DEV19 of the Arun District Local Plan.

In approving the planning application, the delegated report concluded:

*“The proposed single storey rear extension would be of limited depth and the overall design is considered to satisfactory integrate with the character of the host property. … Although the hip to gable roof extension would result in the unbalanced appearance of the pair of semi-detached properties it forms part of, the limited width of the gable extension and the bungalow composition f the dwelling, would not result in this element appearing obtrusive or detrimental in appearance to warrant a refusal in this instance.*

*The proposed dormers would be of sympathetic flat roof design….. The siting of the extension to the rear is such, that it would not be readily visible in the street scene. The proposed roof lights are also considered acceptable. The proposal is not considered to have an adverse impact on the visual amenities to this part of the SDNP due to the limited scale and its sympathetic design and appearance.”*

The permission was not implemented, however, in light of this approval the applicants redesigned the extension to meet their needs and submitted a planning application in 2020. The application was refused. In refusing the application the SDNP Authority stated that the proposal would be overly dominant and unsympathetic due to its scale and design. It would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and this part of High Street and would increase the floor area of the dwelling by more than the approximate 30% limit.

In reaching this conclusion the SDNP Authority stated that the existing dwelling had a floor area of 73.1m2 including the conservatory, but excluding the garden shed. The proposed resultant dwelling would have a floor area of 124.7m2. That the garden shed should also be included in any assessment and it had a floor area of 12.4m2. As a consequence, the hip to gable extension would unbalance the pair of dwellings and the extensions would over dominate the host dwelling and thus be of poor design. As a result, the proposal conflicted with policies SD5 and SD31 of the South Downs Local Plan 2014 – 2033, Circular 2010 relating to National Parks, the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 and Policy HD5 of the Findon Neighbourhood Plan.

*(It should be noted that Findon Parish Council stated that the proposal complied with Policy HD5 of their Neighbourhood Plan).*

**South Downs National Park – Purpose, Duty, Vision and Objectives**

SDNP Purposes and duty:

* To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.
* To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.
* To seek to foster the economic and social well-being of the local communities within the National Park.

SDNP Vision for 2050

* The iconic lowland landscapes and heritage will have been conserved and greatly enhanced. These inspirational places where people work, live, farm and relax, are adapting well to climate change and other pressures.
* People will understand, value and look after the vital natural services that the National Park provides.
* Opportunities will exist for everyone to discover, enjoy, understand and value the National Park and its special qualities.
* Its spatial qualities will underpin the economic and social well-being of local communities in and around it.
* Successful farming, forestry, tourism and other business activities within the National Park will actively contribute to and derive economic benefit from its unique identity and special qualities.

SDNP Objectives

* To conserve the landscape and biodiversity assets of the SDNP.
* Educate people to understand and appreciate the assets of the Park.
* Provide opportunities for everyone to access, enjoy, understand and value the assets of the Park and thus use its resources more responsibly.
* To develop thriving communities.
* To foster successful farming, forestry, tourism and other businesses to contribute to the identity and special qualities of the SDNP.
* Enable people to experience, understand, enjoy and respect the SDNP with everyone working together to benefit the SDNP.

**Planning policy**

*SDNP Local Plan*

Policy SD5 advocates a landscape led approach and states that development should respect the local character through sensitive and high quality design that makes a positive contribution to the overall character and appearance of the area. It should utilise architectural design which is appropriate and sympathetic to its setting in terms of height, massing density, roof form, materials, night and day visibility.

*(SDNP has explained that a landscape led approach is one which deals with all issues in a holistic way. In relation to the application scheme this includes the character and appearance of the built up area, ecology, design and appearance, the needs of the family and energy conservation).*

Policy SD31 deals specifically with domestic extensions. It states that extensions will be permitted where:

1. The proposal does not increase the floor space of the existing dwelling by more than approximately 30% unless there are exceptional circumstances.
2. B) the proposal respects the character of the established character of the local area;
3. The proposal is not overbearing or otherwise harm the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

The supporting text to this policy clarifies that the term ‘existing dwelling’ for the purposes of policy SD31 is the residential unit as it existed on 18 December 2002. Where outbuildings were utilised for ancillary domestic purposes on 18 December 2002, and where the number of outbuildings would be rationalised to improve the appearance of the site, the GIA of the outbuildings may be considered in the assessment of any increase in floor space.

Policy SD1 promotes sustainable forms of development. Policies SD4, SD5 & SD6 deal with landscape character and design. They require new development to be designed to a high standard and to preserve or enhance the landscape quality of the SDNP. Policies SD7 and SD8 deal with tranquility and dark skies.

*Findon Neighbourhood Plan as Revised*

Policy HD5 similarly deals with domestic extensions. It states that proposals will be supported provided that their design and scale are in keeping with the landscape and local character and that their impact on the amenity of the surrounding properties in terms of siting, design and external appearance are acceptable.

*National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (Framework)*

The Core principles of the Framework are to adopt a pro-active approach.

Regarding meeting the needs of everyone the Framework states that the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. Concerning design, the Framework states that new development should function well and add to the overall quality of the area and reflect the identity of local surroundings, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. Planning decisions should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative.

The proposal complies with the above policies for the following reasons.

**Size**

The Council has stated that the floor area of the existing dwelling is 73.1m2. The drawings submitted with the previous application have now been checked on site and are very slightly inaccurate. The drawings have been corrected and the size of the dwelling measured in accordance with RICS 6th edition. This includes all internal walls and features but excludes external walls. Excluding the party wall with the adjoining dwelling the existing dwelling has a GIF of 75.84m2. 30% of this is 22.75m2.

The proposal has been measured in the same way, including air space over the stairs and any internal partitions, but excluding the party wall and external walls.

The proposed ground floor extension will have a floor area of 10.4 m2. However, the existing conservatory will be removed and this has a floor area of 8.9744m2. Thus, the additional ground floor area will be 1.43m2.

The proposed first floor will have a gross floor area (including open space over stairs) of 21.64m2. Thus, the proposed increase in floor area is 23.07m2, which equates to an increase of floor area of 30.4%. If this fractional increase were considered an issue, the depth of the first floor extension could be reduced by 10cm. This would take the increase in floor area down to 22.73m2.

(By comparison and in accordance with the Council’s figures the former proposal would have increased the size of the dwelling by 125m2)

The existing garden shed is not material to the size of the extension. It is used for purposes incidental to the dwellings. For example, to store garden equipment, lawn mower, children’s garden toys, etc. It is not used for ancillary domestic accommodation. Accordingly, irrespective of when it was built it is irrelevant to the size of the existing or proposed dwelling in accordance with policy SD31.

**Design, character and appearance**

No.25 and the attached dwelling at No.27 were designed to be uniform and symmetrical. This is no longer the case to the front or rear. In particular, the rear elevation of the pair of dwellings is cluttered and disjointed. This is primarily due to the number and form of additions to the rear of the adjoining dwelling at No.27. The situation is not helped by the existing conservatory, which is out of keeping with the rear extension at No.27 and the fact that the roofs of the two properties are totally different.

*No.27 and the application property*



*The application property*



The applicants have looked again at their previous design and have completely changed their approach. To simplify and restore a sense of uniformity and rhythm they are looking to provide a continuous ground floor rear elevation with a gable feature adjoining and mirroring that at No.27. At first floor level they will simply continue the dormer at No.27 across the roof slope and give it a hipped end, again to reflect No.27.

Not only will this restore the sense of uniformity and symmetry it will declutter the pair of dwellings and their setting. The proposal will significantly improve the form, proportions, design, and appearance of the pair of dwellings.

Overall, it will enhance the character and appearance of the pair of dwellings and their setting. It will also enhance the character and appearance of the dwellings when glimpsed from the western end of Holmcroft Gardens.

The proposed extension will be located at the rear of the property and will not be visible from the street scene. It will respect and preserve the character and appearance of High Street and this part of the SDNP.

*Looking directly at the application site from High Street*



*Looking towards the application site from the north*



*Looking towards at the appeal site from the south*



*No.27 from the pavement*



**Flood Risk Assessment**

The property is not located in an area at risk of flooding and the proposal will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

**Lighting assessment**

The only roof light in the scheme is above the ground floor rear extension. It is contained between the roof slopes of the rear gables of the pair of dwellings and is located well below the roof of the dormer and main ridge heights of both dwellings. It is located in an area where many of the dwellings have roof lights on their main roof slopes and where there are street lights. For these reasons the proposal will have a negligible impact on dark skies in the locality.

**Landscaping and ecology**

The proposed extension will be fully retained within the footprint of the building or within a small part of the rear patio area. It will not result in the loss of any trees, shrubs or areas of lawn.

The applicants already maintain trees and shrubs within and around their garden to attract birds, insects and wildlife. In addition to this they maintain a compost heap and propose to provide hedgehog holes within all boundary fences they own.

They propose to include a bat box within the roof of the dwelling and a bird box on the north elevation of the dwelling, just below eaves height.

These benefits can all be secured through the imposition of landscape and ecology conditions.

**Water and Energy efficiency**

The existing dwelling is dated and not energy efficient. The proposal will result in considerable investment in the property and the new works will be built to current building regulation standards.

The whole of the roof will be fully insulated to current standards; the new openings will be double glazed; low wattage energy efficient lighting will be used inside the extension area; the new windows will let in more natural daylight and sunlight; water butts will be used to collect rainwater for use in the garden; Low water flush toilets will be fitted; and the new kitchen and bathroom will be fitted with extract fans which meet with current building regulations.

All of these things can be secured through a condition.

**Sustainability conclusion**

Economic – The proposal will provide local employment and will support the local economy during the construction phase.

Social – The proposal will meet the current and future needs of the family and, in particular will meet the needs of their children.

The proposal will make full and effective use of an existing dwelling, without compromising the character and appearance of SDNP.

Environmental – The energy and water efficiency of the resultant dwelling will be significantly improved.

The proposal will make full and effective use of an existing dwelling.

The proposal will result in ecology benefits, appropriate to a small dwelling within the built up area.

The proposal will enhance the character and appearance of the pair of dwellings and their setting.

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**Ecosystem Services Statement**

**25 High Street – Rear extension**

**Introduction**

The proposal is for a rear domestic extension to a dwelling located within the built up area of the village of Findon.

This statement demonstrates that the proposal complies with policy SD2 of the South Downs Local Plan 2019

**Policy SD2**

Policy SD2 explains that Ecosystem Services are the benefits that people and society get from the natural environment. It goes on to identify four aspects of ecoservices in the SDNP. They include:

Supporting Services offered by flora, fauna and micro-organisms.

Provisioning services which relate to the products and productivity of the natural environment.

Regulating services are the controls from the natural environment.

Cultural services relate to people’s enjoyment of the National Park and its special qualities.

With this in mind policy SD2 seeks to ensure that all proposals have an overall positive impact on the ability of the natural environment to contribute goods and services.

**The property and the proposal**

Landscape Context – Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitats – The site is not allocated on this plan.

**Ecosystem Services Mapping**

The application site is not allocated or zoned on the following maps.

Air Purification management Zone

Green Travel

Local Climate Regulation

Pollination

Water Purification

Accessible Nature ESBA – C3 Int and low demand

Carbon Storage – A4 – Improve

Education – A7 Assess

Noise – A6 Mentor/Assess

**Landscape Context Maps**

Landscape Context – Biodiversity – No allocation.

Landscape Context – Flooding – The site is not located in an area at risk of flooding.

Landscape Context – Historic Environment – There are no listed buildings or other heritage assets within the immediate or wider setting of the application site.

Landscape Context – Historic landscape character – Downland village

Landscape Context – Public Rights of Way and Open Access Land – None on site or which affect the application site.

**Positive impacts**

The proposal complies with policy SD2 of the SDLP in the following ways:

* Sustainable management of land and water
* Protect and provide more, better and joined up natural habitats.
* Conserve water resources
* Manage and reduce the risk of flooding
* Enhanced energy efficiency.
* Improve opportunities for people’s health and wellbeing.
* Makes full and effective use of an existing dwelling.

This will be achieved in the following ways:

* Hedgehog holes in fences; bat and bird boxes; maintenance of trees and shrubs.
* The new building will have water butts to collect rainwater, which will be used in the gardens of the property. This will provide sustainable management, conserve water resources and reduce the risk of flooding.
* The building will provide the accommodation required by this local family, who actively support the local services and facilities.

**Negative impacts**

The construction of the extension will result in a modest level of activity and traffic.

The building is slightly larger than the one it will replace and so will result in some additional built development, albeit hidden from public view.

**Conclusion**

In this instance the positive benefits materially outweigh the negative impacts and the proposal complies with policy SD2 of the SDLP.