

TREVOR J. BELL

Architectural Services.

3 Church Cottages, Blackmoor, Liss, Hants. GU33 6BW.

Our ref: T741

Your ref: 23986/010

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024

EHDC Planning Dept  
Penns Place  
Petersfield  
GU31 4EX

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Replacement dwelling at Hunters Place, Bighton Rd, Medstead, GU34 5NE.

We have resubmitted our application via the Planning Portal for the Removal of a Condition relating to the above consent. The appropriate fee of £293.00 has been sent electronically as well. The relevant Condition is no.5 which seeks to prevent the use of the roofspace created in the approved dwelling as further habitable space. I have revised our case for the proposal following changes to local Policy.

Background.

The approved dwelling is a replacement unit which was originally granted in 1996 under the reference 23986/005. This consent allowed the new home to benefit from the H16 allowance of 50% extra habitable floorspace over and above the floor area of the original dwelling. I understand that the actual floorspace increase approved under that application was actually 56% which was deemed acceptable at the time.

The work was actually commenced under that consent shortly after the decision and it was built up out of the ground to damp course level. The work then stopped and the site lay dormant for the intervening time up until 2018 when works were recommenced. The original decision being extant allowed the continuation of the works without further formal application and consent. However due to the original design being not appropriate inside for the new owner's needs so a subsequent application was submitted in June 2018 to allow an internal redesign. That also sought approval for the additional habitable floorspace created by changing the use of the integral garage.

This was all proposed under the application 23986/010 and the details were deemed acceptable by your Office in August 2018. That consent allowed a further increase in habitable space to be created bringing the overall increase from the original size to 86%. This increase was obviously in excess of the H16 limitations but it was influenced by the impact of current Permitted Development Rights and the acceptance of this particular dwelling's possibilities.

That work has been completed in accordance within the approved details.

Condition 5 (As stated on the Consent).

Notwithstanding the provisions of Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order, 2015 (or any Order revoking, re-enacting or modifying that Order) no habitable floor space shall be formed within the roof space of the dwelling hereby permitted. The use of the aforementioned roof area shall be confined to incidental domestic storage purposes only.

Reason - The site lies in a rural area where it is considered that the use of the roof space for habitable purposes would result in a larger dwelling than originally permitted, resulting in a loss of the range of dwellings in the countryside and as such, be contrary to the adopted policies of the Local Planning Authority.

Proposal.

The roof space which has been generated by the approved design creates a large void within its structural framing. The external design was initiated by the original site owners, not the current owners, so the steep roof pitch was initiated way back in 1996. This was always going to generate a potential for future development. The current consent allows for the use of this space for incidental storage only. However the Applicants wish to use this space to enhance the habitable area to the benefit of all the occupants. The house will be occupied by Mr & Mrs Hayward, their children and Mrs Hayward's elderly mother plus guests.

Mr Hayward works on the adjacent Grove Farm hence the reason for the creation of this dwelling which offers a convenient location for him. It also allows him to be close at hand if work reasons demand.

Mrs Hayward has been diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis and will require specific facilities to ease the use of the accommodation. These requirements may change as time passes and the flexibility to adapt the internal rooms will be important for all the family. Mrs Hayward may require additional space at ground floor level should her condition make that necessary in the future. This could be difficult within the room provision as approved as the rest of the family will be impacted on. Alternatively a special suite could be created at first floor level to accommodate her and a stair lift can be installed to ease access between the two levels.

Mrs Hayward's mother also lives in the house permanently and she requires facilities with sufficient flexibility to adapt to her needs as she gets older. She is currently in her 80's and will expect to be in occupation for a considerable time to come.

Whilst the current accommodation has been created within the approved layout this has been compromised somewhat by the inherited original design format. The ability to utilise the roofspace to adapt to the family's evolving needs would prove invaluable. The family intends to reside there indefinitely as a whole unit thereby allowing the abilities for overall care for one another to remain all under one roof. This makes life now and in the future so much simpler for all concerned.

Additional Habitable Space.

The additional habitable space which can be potentially created is obviously determined by the currently approved roof format which has a generous roof pitch. The applicants are not proposing a structural extension but just using the void that is already there. This space is being utilised anyway for ancillary storage and household plant and services equipment. Another part of the roof void is open to the roof framing over the Lounge area so that section would remain as approved with its vaulted ceiling. The central section of the roof void has a lightwell which benefits the Kitchen space below and this is part of the approved design, that requirement would also remain.

This leaves just the roof areas in the 3 wings which would effectively become additional usable space. Two would be for habitable use and the third would remain for general household storage. This offers the flexibility previously mentioned to adapt the overall accommodation to the changing needs of the family. There would be no increase to the house footprint or the roof volume if this space was utilised as the whole envelope would be existing construction. No dormers would be proposed, just rooflights within the existing roof plane.

The effective floor area increase is 90m<sup>2</sup> approx with a height of 1.5m, or greater, above floor level. This figure includes the previously mentioned Plant Room, the lightwell and the stairwell which all reduce the actual usable floorspace.

H16 Policy.

The H16 Policy, which was the driving force for the addition of the restrictive Condition originally, has of course now been scrapped. Thereby the only stated reason for refusal on the previously submitted application (23986/011) no longer applies.

The use of this roofspace would generally fall under the national PD Rights and other properties will continue to benefit from such an allowance. This particular site has had the PD Rights removed in an attempt to limit further automatic expansion. Again this restriction was obviously added with the H16 Policy in mind.

Emerging Local Plan.

Whilst we are aware that the current Local Plan is still in force and forms the basis at this time of all the Council's decisions, we are also aware that the H16 Policy has been scrapped. It appears in the draft proposals for the new Local Plan that the "control" on rural properties will fall back to a more sensible and more manageable individual assessment of each proposal on its own merits. It would seem reasonable that when that Policy change is finally adopted that this proposal would be looked at in a totally different light in the future. It could then be viewed that the property is being utilised to its full potential without causing further harm to the local surroundings and neighbour's amenities. It is also providing a home for life for the family members who have specific needs and enables them all to remain as a single unit rather being split unnecessarily due to the limitations of the accommodation. The more site-specific approach of the proposed Local Plan will offer all parties the chance to present a reasonable solution for each site rather than a blanket control on the amount of floorspace allowable. In this particular case it seems totally reasonable to utilise a volume that already exists without changing the character of the property externally.

Conclusion.

In these current times there is considerable pressure on all families to be able to afford suitably sized adaptable living accommodation and maintain access to essential care needs locally. To be able to achieve all these under one roof and offer the flexibility to adapt to further changes as they arise is a massive positive to this family. It avoids splitting the family unnecessarily and causing both future financial and physical hardships.

We believe that the proposal, when the specific needs of this particular family are taken into account, is not an unreasonable request. It can be achieved with no externally visible expansion of the house volume and the only apparent changes would be the inclusion of 6no.additional rooflights. In the absence of the H16 restriction it would now appear that there is no logical reason to refuse this simple internal expansion which has no impact on the streetscene or surrounding amenities/character.

Should you require any further information to support this application then please contact either myself or the Applicants for clarification.

Yours sincerely, Trevor J Bell