



Horsham
District
Council



Molly McLean
91 Boundary Road
Hove
BN41 1AB

Our Ref: SDNP/23/03514/PRES
Contact Officer: Shazia Penne
Tel. No.: 01403 215187

24 November 2023

Dear Molly McLean

PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

Applicant Name: Michael Modlock
Proposal: Householder extensions and associated works.
Site Address: Sandrock, Old London Road, Coldwaltham, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 1LF

Thank you for your correspondence received 14th July 2023 seeking pre-application advice relating to householder extensions and associated works, and my apologies for the delay in replying. I can advise as follows:-

Executive Summary

This pre-application is a resubmission of a previous pre-application advice SDNP/22/01782/PRE, the previous advice stated that the construction of an extension to the side and rear of Sandrock, would be unacceptable as the scale of the extension is considered to be excessive and would considerably exceed the 30% increase allowance set out in policy SD31 of the South Downs Local Plan 2019, thereby resulting in the loss of a small to medium sized dwelling within the South Downs National Park. Further, the proposed extension by reason of its scale and massing would not relate sympathetically to the existing dwelling and would harm the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposed development would therefore be considered to currently conflict with policies SD4, SD5, SD12 and SD15 of the South Downs Local Plan 2019.

Having reviewed the amended plans and having been on site, the proposed side/rear extension would be heavily reduced proposal allowing for a larger living room on the ground floor and an additional bedroom on the first floor, other works include erection of a carport and creation of stairs to access what is considered the garden area at first floor level.

Planning Policy

The South Downs Local Plan was adopted on the 2nd of July 2019 and forms the relevant Development Plan related to this proposal. The relevant policies are listed in the Appendix, attached to this letter.

Horsham District Council, Development Management,
Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham, RH12 1RL
Tel: 01403 215187 Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk

ACKAPP

The South Downs Partnership Management Plan (2020-2025) sets out the long-term outcomes of the National Park, as well as 5-year policies and a continually updated Delivery Framework.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the National Planning Policies relating to National Parks.

Assessment

The Site

The application site lies on the northern side of Old London Road, within the settlement boundary of Coldwaltham. The site is located within the Coldwaltham Conservation Area and within a Flood Risk Zone 2 and 3 area.

The dwelling is a 2-bedroom, two storeys, detached dwelling with a single storey addition to the eastern side. The property is comprising a mix of stone and tile hanging to the external elevations with brick quoin detailing around the windows. A pitched roof porch extends to the roadside in the southern frontage of the property. The garden extends to the north and eastern side of the property and is elevated some distance above the dwelling and road level.

The planning history relating to the site shows that planning permission was granted under application SDNP/19/00471/HOUS in 2019 for replacement windows, existing tile hanging on first floor and reconstruction of the front porch and a pre-application advice was given SDNP/22/01782/PRE in 2022.

The Proposal

Pre-application advice is sought for the construction of a two-storey side/rear extension and integral carport which would be sited on the north-east corner of the existing dwelling. On the ground floor the proposed extension would provide a living room and carport with the first-floor level of the extension providing a master bedroom.

The proposed extension would provide 38 square metres of additional floor space in comparison to the existing dwelling which incorporates a floor space of 95 square metres. The images shown in this statement show that the proposed extension would be set back from the road to the south and comprise a slightly lower height to the existing dwelling.

The proposal would involve some earth/engineering works which would involve cutting into the steeply sloped banked areas to the eastern side and northern rear garden areas of the existing house. A stepped access would be provided up to the rear garden along with a terrace area to the north of the extension. The plans also show that a new vehicular access would be formed to the site from Old London Road to the south.

The amended proposed plans are considered to form a scale that would be similar to those within the surrounding area most notably The Old Forge located to the west of the site.

Principle

Policy SD31 of the South Downs Local Plan 2019 (SDLP) seeks to preserve small and medium housing stock, and provides that proposals for extensions, annexes and outbuildings will only be permitted if not constituting an increase of more than approximately 30% of the existing dwelling in the absence of exceptional circumstances. Existing dwelling is defined as the residential unit that existed on 18th December 2002 for the purposes of policy SD31. Development will, furthermore, be required to respect the established character of the local area and should not be of a form that would be detrimental to the amenity of nearby residents.

The primary purpose of this policy is to reduce the loss of small and medium homes in the National Park either through over-extension or replacement by substantially larger homes. This is

consistent with Policy SD27: Mix of Homes. The purpose of this Policy is explained in paragraph 7.33 of the SDLP namely to provide a mix of homes that reflects the need and community aspiration for small and medium sized homes.

Paragraph 7.89 of the SDLP defines a small dwelling as having a total GIA of 120 square metres or less. The existing property comprises a relatively modest 2-bedroom dwelling with a floor area of 95 square metres. The existing property is therefore considered to fall within the small to medium housing that is sought to be retained within the South Downs National Park. The proposal would comprise an extension to the side/rear of the dwelling that would incorporate a floor area of 38 square metres. The total floor area of the dwelling as extended would measure 119 square metres. An extension of this scale would be considered an acceptable increase that would increase the property from a modest 2-bedroom dwelling to a larger 3-bedroom property.

The proposal would therefore be considered to remain as a 'small dwelling' as set out in the SDNPA Technical Advice Note at section 3.9:

'In some cases, where an existing dwelling is particularly small, an extension or replacement that exceeds an approximately 30% floorspace increase may still ensure that the resultant floorspace remains below 120m² GIA. In such situations, there would be no loss of a small or medium sized dwelling so the proposal would be considered acceptable in terms of the percentage floorspace increase.'

The proposed extension would therefore comply with the requirements of policy SD31(1a) of the SDLP in terms of the floor area increase.

Landscape, Heritage & Design

Policies SD4 and SD5 states that development proposals will only be permitted where they conserve and enhance landscape character through sensitive and high-quality design that makes a positive contribution to the overall character and appearance of the area. Furthermore, development should also;

- a) Be informed by landscape character, reflecting the context and type of landscape in which the development is located;
- b) The design, layout and scale of proposals conserve and enhance existing landscape and seascape character features which contribute to the distinctive character, pattern and evolution of the landscape;
- c) They will safeguard the experiential and amenity qualities of the landscape; and
- d) Where planting is considered appropriate, it is consistent with local character, enhances biodiversity, contributes to the delivery of GI and uses native species, unless there are appropriate and justified reasons to select non-native species.

Policy SD12 of the South Downs Local Plan states that development proposals will only be permitted where they conserve and enhance the historic environment, including through the safeguarding of heritage assets and their setting. Development proposals which affect heritage assets or their setting will be determined with regard to the significance of the asset, including the long-term conservation and enhancement of the asset.

Policy SD15 of SDLP specifies that proposals within a conservation area, will only be permitted where they preserve or enhance the special architectural or historic interest, character or appearance of the conservation area.

The existing dwelling comprises a relatively modest dwelling which fronts directly onto Old London Road and is located within the Coldwaltham Conservation Area. The existing dwelling incorporates traditional materials and is considered to positively contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The road predominantly comprises residential properties, mainly two storeys in nature with a range of materials incorporated. Whilst the existing property has a reasonably sized garden to the east and north, this is constrained by the steep banks

which rise to the northern rear aspect of the plot. The garden area would therefore require excavation of the existing bank to construct the proposed extension. It is therefore expected that an application submitted should include drawings showing the existing and proposed land levels.

The amended two storey extension would sit comfortably within the plot and its scale and massing would be sympathetic to the original property. The proposed extension whilst being openly visible from the street scene and within the Conservation Area, this would be no different from what already exists on the immediate street scene. It is considered that the extension by reason of its scale and massing would be a sympathetic addition to the existing dwelling and would not harm the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Having discussed the scheme with the Conservation Officer Sean Rix, no concerns have been risen however comments in regard to softening the roof on the eastern elevation have been requested, should the pre-application advice be supported. The proposed development would therefore be considered to compliant with policies SD4, SD5, SD12 and SD15 of the SDLP.

In the event that an application is to be submitted to the Council, a detailed Heritage Statement should be included within the submission to understand the impact of the proposal on the Conservation Area.

Ecosystem Services

Policy SD2 of the SDLP provides that development will be permitted that secures an overall positive impact on the ability of natural environment to contribute goods and services. Development should incorporate high quality design and deliver opportunities to sustainably manage the use of resources, mitigate/increase resilience to the impacts of climate change, improve public health and improve habitats and biodiversity.

Any planning application should be submitted with the Eco-System Services Checklist which sets out the measures that have been incorporated within the scheme to provide a contribution to ecosystem services. Further information on ecosystem services, how to design these into the development scheme and the checklist can be found via the following link:-

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Core-06-Ecosystem-Services-Technical-Advice-Note-householder.pdf>

Dark Night Skies

Policy SD8 of the SDLP states that development proposals will be permitted where they conserve and enhance the intrinsic quality of dark night skies and the integrity of the Dark Sky Core. Development proposals must demonstrate that all opportunities to reduce light pollution have been taken and must ensure that the measured and observed sky quality in the surrounding area is not negatively affected.

The site is located within Dark Sky Zone E1(a), which is an area of intrinsic rural darkness. The submitted drawings, shows the introduction of a large, glazed dormer window to the front elevation of the dwelling. Given the proposed residential use of the building, some concern would be raised regarding the light emittance from the glazed aspects of the building and the impact this would have on the dark night skies within the National Park. Any application submitted for this proposal should include a statement which outlines the measures that will be taken to reduce light pollution to the dark night skies within the National Park.

On the basis of the above it is advised that the development is of a scale and siting which would not be supported in its current form. While there may be some development potential on the site this would be for a significantly reduced scheme, and there is a strong preference that any new built-form is sited amongst existing development in the locality.

Newts

It should be noted that the site is located wholly within a red Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone, which is the most suitable habitat, with a high risk of great crested newts. Developers may be able to use the District Licence Scheme but some mitigation may be required (e.g. best practice / timing / capture of newts).

Conclusion

If you pursue a formal planning application, please note that the requirements of the South Downs National Park Authority Local Validation List will apply with regard to the information required to be submitted. Further information is available at

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning/making-an-application/local-validation-list/> .

It would be advisable to contact the Building Control department at your Local Authority to check if building regulation approval is required.

Please note that the advice contained within this letter constitutes an informal Officer's opinion and does not prejudice, nor is binding upon, any future decision taken by the South Downs National Park Authority.

Yours sincerely,

Shazia Penne

Planning Officer

For and on behalf of South Downs National Park

Appendix

National Park Purposes

The two statutory purposes of the SDNP designation are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage,
- To promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of their areas.

If there is a conflict between these two purposes, conservation takes precedence. There is also a duty to foster the economic and social wellbeing of the local community in pursuit of these purposes.

Partnership Management Plan

The South Downs Partnership Management Plan (SDPMP) was adopted on 3 December 2013. It sets out a Vision and long term Outcomes for the National Park, as well as 5 year Policies and a continually updated Delivery Framework. The SDPMP is a material consideration in planning applications.

The following Policies and Outcomes are of particular relevance to this case:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Circular 2010

Government policy relating to National Parks is set out in English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010 and The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was issued on 24 July 2018. The Circular and NPPF confirm that National Parks have the highest status of protection, and the NPPF states at paragraph 172 that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in national parks and that the conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations and should be given great weight in National Parks.