expires 16.11.09

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0373/09 **Recommendation - Permit**

Site: **2 New Cottages Coombes Road Coombes Lancing**

Proposal: **Two-storey side extension (with rear balcony) and front porch**

The Application

The application relates to the southern half of a pair of semi-detached 1950's former farm workers cottages, on the west side of Coombes Road, within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the north of Lancing College.

The proposals are for a two-storey side extension (south), single-storey rear extension, and front porch (as amended). The side extension would be 4m wide, by 5.5m deep, by 7.3m in height, and would provide a first floor bedroom and ground floor reception room. The rear extension would be 4.8m wide, by 1.8m deep, by 3.7m in height to the top of the mono-pitched roof, which would extend northwards across the top of the existing rear extension. The front porch would be 2m wide, by 1.1m in depth , by 3.4m in height.

The dwelling itself is constructed with 'wire-cut' bricks with the first floor tile-hung in plain tiles. The roof is plain clay tile with a lower rear eaves level than the front of the house. The attached neighbour (no.1) is not tile hung and has the original utilitarian appearance of the pair.

The proposed extension would provide increased living accommodation within the dwelling, which is currently of very modest proportions and room sizes.

Consultations and Representations

South Downs Joint Committee: *(RE Amended plans)* Consider the amendments to be a significant improvement on the original proposals and they are therefore happy to withdraw their objection, provided that the permission, if granted, is subject to a condition regarding materials (which should harmonise with those of the existing dwelling).

Lancing Parish Council: No observations.

Third Parties: the attached neighbour at No.1 New cottages has no objections to the amended scheme.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

South East Plan (GOSE 2009): C3
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AC2, AC3, AH7.
PPS 1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005)
PPS7 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas' (ODPM 2004)

Planning Assessment

Policies

The South Downs National Park Authority will take on its statutory powers in 2011, where particular relevant parts of the AONB will be revoked and come under that jurisdiction. Until that time Regional advice on such areas is covered by Policy C3 of the South East Plan which states that high priority will be given to the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty in AONB's, and that planning decisions should have regard for their setting, where the emphasis should be on small-scale proposals that are sustainably located and designed.

With regards to the location of the site Local Plan policies AG1 and AC2 are relevant where they cover development within the Sussex Downs AONB. They state that only in compelling circumstances will development be permitted, and that any development which would be harmful to the visual quality and distinctive characteristics of the area will not be permitted. Policy AH7 of the Local Plan states that extensions and alterations should be designed so as not to result in an unacceptable degree of overlooking, a loss of natural light or an overbearing effect on neighbouring dwellings. They should be of sympathetic design and materials to the original dwelling and the area in general.

The Government's objectives for sustainable development within rural areas are set out within Planning Policy Statement 7. The emphasis of this guidance is to raise the quality of life and the environment in rural areas through the promotion of, amongst other things: thriving, inclusive and sustainable rural communities, ensuring people have decent places to live by improving the quality and sustainability of local environments and neighbourhoods; good quality, sustainable development that respects and, where possible, enhances local distinctiveness and the intrinsic qualities of the countryside; and continued protection of the open countryside for the benefit of all, with the highest level of protection for the most valued landscapes and environmental resources. With regards to designated areas such as AONB's and National Parks the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape and countryside should be given great weight in development control decisions.

Affect on the rural character of the AONB and National Park

With regards to whether there are compelling circumstances for the extension of the dwelling in this manner. The pair of semi-detached dwellings are very small in character, with a two-storey front elevation, and to the rear, windows only at ground floor level due to the restricted headroom and rising ground levels. The floor area of the existing dwelling is 73sqm, with some of the room sizes considered to be small, particularly in the case of the existing bathroom (2.25sqm) and two of the bedrooms being 7sqm or less. As originally proposed the two-storey side extension would have meant an increase in floor area of 89sqm which given the diminutive size of the existing dwelling was considered to be excessive. In addition to the percentage of increase of the proposed extension the design and scale were considered to be out of character for the surrounding area, and overly large and bulky given the open setting of the exposed downland site.

In response to concerns raised by Officers and objections received from The South Downs Joint Committee, the proposals have been vastly modified to ensure the character and setting of the dwelling are not adversely affected by the scale and bulk of the proposals.

The two-storey side extension has been reduced so that it retains a subservient form, rather than overwhelming the existing semi-detached house. The extension would now be set back from the front elevation, and would be approximately half the width of the existing dwelling. It would also now not add visible bulk when approaching the site from the south due to the extension not projecting to the rear, and it retaining the lower rear eaves level of the west elevation.

The front porch has been moved to the original front elevation of the dwelling rather than straddling across where the two elements join. This is considered to be an improvement, and prevents there being elongation of the original dwelling, and helps to retain a subservient setting for the side extension.

The reduction in size of the two-storey extension has resulted in a compromise in internal accommodation. Consequently the amended plans show a further rear extension, which would abut the south of the existing 1.8m deep bathroom addition, and would extend the width of the rear elevation of the house (but it would not project behind the proposed side extension). The additional floor space would be given over to an addition to the bathroom and kitchen area. The rear extension is considered modest and would be sympathetic in deign to the original house. Due to it being at the rear of the building and only marginally larger in height than the existing extension, it is not considered that it would adversely affect the character of the building or its downland setting.

Residential amenity

The amended plans show that the rear projecting first floor balcony and patio doors have been removed from the scheme. This would protect the privacy of the garden of the attached property, which is currently not overlooked by any first floor windows.

The additional rear extension would not adversely affect the sunlight or outlook to the rear of the attached dwelling, and it is therefore considered that the affect on the residential amenity of the attached house would be negligible.

Recommendation

APPROVE for reason that :-

The development hereby permitted would not be harmful to the visual quality and distinctive characteristics of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring properties. It would consequently not conflict with the policies of the Adur District Plan (AG1, AC2 & AH7)

1. C1Ci
2. C14Aii (30.10.09 – AC2 & AH7 of the ADLP)
3. C12Ei

Case Offic[redacted] 13/11/09
Date: 13.11.09