expires 27/5

Application Number: ADC/0177/08 Recommendation – REFUSE

Site: Riverside Cottage, Steyning Road, Shoreham

Proposal: Two storey extension (with rooms in the roof) and attached garage

The Application

Riverside Cottage is an L-shaped detached dwelling in an isolated location within the Countryside and Sussex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is accessed via a long track off the Steyning Road which leads to a Southern Water pumping station. There are no other dwellings in the vicinity.

The cottage lies at the foot of Mill Hill with a steep treed bank immediately behind the property. It has no garden as such. It is finished in a mixture of flint and render with a tiled roof.

It is proposed to construct a substantial two storey extension with rooms in the roof at the rear of the cottage and a single garage attached to the north side. The submitted plans show a sitting room, study and utility at ground floor with 6 bedrooms proposed on the upper floors (although the applicant stated on site that the loft rooms would be used as a music room/hobby room rather than bedrooms).

Works have partly commenced on site with the digging out of foundations. Part of the steep bank at the rear has been cut back and an area of hardstanding has been formed at the side of the cottage. These works are unauthorised.

Consultations and Representations

South Downs Joint Committee - Objects. The extension would very significantly increase the bulk of the dwelling and completely change its character from a modest cottage to a very substantial house.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 (WSCC 2005): LOC2, CH2, DEV1
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993 – 2006 (ADC 1996): AC1, AC2, AC3, AH7 and Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising Development Control Standard No.3 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings'
PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development (ODPM 2005)
PPS7 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas'

Planning Assessment

Policies

Structure Plan policy CH2 requires all development within AONBs to be compatible with or enhance the distinctive character and quality of the landscape. Structure Plan policy DEV1 seeks to protect, and where possible, enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area, requiring high standards of design, layout and construction. Policy AC2 of the Adur District Local Plan states that any development that would be harmful to the visual quality and distinctive characteristics of the AONB will not be permitted. Policy AC3 requires development to have regard, among others, to the AONB's characteristic sculptured landform and appearance.

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.

Scale, massing and impact on character

The proposed extension has a substantial footprint which will wrap around the existing cottage. The scale of the extension fails to respect the existing building, having a higher ridge and completely dominating the original property. Its character will change from a modest cottage to a large house and the proposed extension can in no way be said to be sympathetic or subsidiary to the original property.

In floorspace terms, the proposal represents in excess of a 170% increase, resulting in a much bulkier and substantial building. The proposal will fail to comply with Policy AH7 of the Adur District Local Plan as its design would not be sympathetic to the original dwelling.

Visual amenity

The dwelling is in an isolated position and can only be glimpsed from the Shoreham flyover. Its present visual impact is not therefore significant in the wider area. It could be argued that the substantial bulk of the proposed extension will make the building more prominent in the landscape. Certainly, with the associated works to excavate the bank behind the property, the enlarged property will have a greater impact on the visual quality of the AONB.

Recommendation

That the application is REFUSED for the following reason:

1. B5BR (amended) "from the visual amenities of the Sussex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and thereby conflict...CH2, DEV1 and AC2 and AH7"

Case Officer P. Barnett ..... Date 8/5/08

8/5/08