

John Wheatley
30 Maltravers Street
Arundel
BN18 9BU

Our Ref: SDNP/17/03008/PRE
Contact Officer: Stella New
Tel. No.: 01730 819216

27 July 2017

Dear John Wheatley

RE: Pre-Application Advice - Conversion and change of use of an existing detached timber framed double car port, to provide bedroom accommodation to the main house, accessed by means of a small glazed link between the two structures
Site Address: Thomas Cottage 104 Wepham, The Splash, Burpham, Arundel, West Sussex, BN18 9RG

Thank you for your correspondence received 12 June 2017 seeking pre-application advice.

I write in response to the above pre-application.

I don't think there is a need to outline a detailed description of the site but I initially summarise some of its characteristics.

Thomas Cottage is a Grade II Listed, thatched roof, timber framed building with brick and flint elevations within the Conservation Area of Wepham. It is situated perpendicular to Splash Lane and is raised slightly on a bank in line with the front flint boundary wall. It has several small ancillary buildings, sheds and out houses to the south and to the east, including an open timber framed double car-port to the rear of the dwelling.

The cottage experienced significant damage due to a fire at the property, including loss of the original thatched roof, and as part of its reinstatement a 1.5m rear extension was added to the rear of the dwelling.

Consultation Responses

The SDNPA Historic Building officer attended the site visit on 6 July 2017, and provided verbal consultation comments which have been incorporated in this letter.

Relevant Planning History:

SDNP/13/05734/HOUS Proposed reinstatement and extension. Approved 17.02.2014

SDNP/13/05739/LIS Proposed reinstatement and extension. Approved 17.02.2014

Policy Context

Applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan, currently, in this area is the Arun District Council Local Plan (2003). The following saved policies are relevant to this application:

- GEN3 – Protection of the Countryside
- GEN7 – The Form of New Development
- GEN33 – Light pollution
- AREA2 – Conservation Areas

The South Downs Local Plan: Preferred Options was approved for consultation by the National Park authority on 16 July 2015 to go out for public consultation under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The consultation period ran from 2 September to 28 October 2015 and the responses received are being considered by the Authority. The next stage in the plan preparation will be the publication and then submission of the Local Plan for independent examination. The Pre-Submission Version of the draft Local Plan is anticipated to be formally published for consultation in September 2017. At present, the Preferred Options Local Plan is a material consideration in the assessment of this planning application in accordance with paragraph 216 of the NPPF, which confirms that weight can be given to policies in emerging plans following publication. Based on the early stage of preparation, the policies within the Preferred Options Local Plan are currently afforded limited weight.

Relevant policies include:

- SD1 – Sustainable Development in the South Downs National Park
- SD2 – Ecosystems Services
- SD6 – Design
- SD9 – Dark Night Skies
- SD39 – Conservation Areas

National Park Purposes

The two statutory purposes of the SDNP designation are:

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

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

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 and came into effect on 27 March 2012. The Circular and NPPF confirm that National Parks have the highest status of protection and the NPPF states at paragraph 115 that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic

beauty in the National Parks and that the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations and should also be given great weight in National Parks.

Paragraph 132 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets as 'significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting.'

South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan 2014-2019

The outcomes and associated policies of the SDNP Partnership Management Plan are also a material consideration. Relevant policies are as follows:

Policy 3: Protect and enhance tranquillity and dark night skies.

Policy 9: Historic Environment

Assessment

The main issues for consideration with regard to the proposals are listed below:

- Principle of development;
- Impact on the Listed Building and Conservation Area.
- The siting, scale and appearance of the proposed development

Principle of Development

The principle of development is generally acceptable providing it has no harmful impact to the Listed Building or Conservation Area, or their setting. This is important to consider in relation to Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which requires 'special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.' The First Purpose of a National Park is also to conserve and enhance heritage value, alongside General Policy 10 of the SDNPA Partnership Management Plan (2014).

The conversion of the car port to living accommodation is in principle acceptable; it is an existing building in relatively close proximity to the cottage. Change of its use to bedroom accommodation, with shower and toilet facilities, would effectively extend the living accommodation of the main dwelling. Although it is proposed to be linked to the main dwelling it could in theory function as a self-contained unit of accommodation, ancillary to the main dwelling, so would therefore require full planning permission.

Impact on the Listed Building and Conservation Area.

It is understood that the rear elevation of the cottage is a modern extension, and therefore not original or historic fabric. The Historic Buildings Officer is therefore of the view that the proposed conversion and glass link will not be harmful to the Listed Building.

As the existing car port is to the rear of the dwelling it is considered that its conversion will not visually impact the Conservation Area or its setting.

Design and appearance

The design and appearance of your proposals need to preserve or enhance the Listed Building and Conservation Area, i.e. be sensitive to and in keeping with them.

The use of a glass link is commonly employed to connect an extension or outbuilding to a listed building as this serves to maintain the visual integrity of the original building. The proposal to slightly sink down the glass link so that it fits underneath the brow of the existing thatch is welcomed. Officers recommend that section drawings are submitted with the full planning application in order to demonstrate how rainwater run-off will be dealt with.

The northern elevation of the car port is partially visible from the streetscene, however it is considered that the use of timber cladding, matching the existing car port materials would mean that the development would have minimal visual impact. The introduction of a dormer on the eastern elevation to accommodate the bathroom is also acceptable.

Impact on amenity and Dark Night Skies

As there are no openings proposed on the western elevation, it is considered that there is unlikely to be any impact to neighbour amenity or overlooking issues either out of or in to the development.

The South Downs National Park now has International Dark Night Skies Reserve designation. All new development must therefore seek to reduce harmful external and internal light pollution which affects the night time tranquillity of the National Park.

Whilst the dwelling is within the main settlement of Wepham, where domestic light spill is already apparent, it is nonetheless in a relatively rural location. The glass link in particular could be problematic if lit continuously at night time, and the use of timed or ideally sensor lighting would be encouraged. The use of black-out blinds during non-daylight hours, and/or low transmittance or smart glass to mitigate potential light spill is also recommended.

Ecology

Whilst a formal response has not been sought from the County Ecologist, there is a possibility that, given the style and rural location of the building, bats may be roosting in the eaves or roof space of the car port. A preliminary bat survey may be required in order to verify this when a formal application comes forward.

- Advice on bats and the planning process can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/bats-protection-surveys-and-licences>. Where bat surveys are needed, applicants are advised to contract a suitably experienced and qualified ecologist (see <http://www.cieem.net/members-directory> or an on-line search will find a number of local ecologists).
- If required, the survey report should either confirm that bats are not present or not affected, or, if present and likely to be affected, identify the nature and scale of impacts in terms of species, numbers and roost status / use. This will help the planning authority assess the likelihood of the work breaching the Regulations, and what mitigation, if any, may be required.

Conclusion

Whilst the outcome of any formal application cannot be pre-judged, it is considered that, based on the information provided, the proposals would be likely to receive support from officers. Consent for Listed Building and Householder planning permission should both be applied for.

Information to accompany a full application

In the event that a formal application is to be submitted, please consult the SDNPA's Local Validation List through the link below:

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

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 faithfully,

Stella New
Development Management Assistant