
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1st November 2016

by Gareth W Thomas BSc(Hons) MSc(Dist) PgDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 07 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/W1850/D/16/3154790

Yew Tree House, Stretton Grandison, Ledbury, Herefordshire HR8 2TS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Gordon Lee against the decision of Herefordshire Council.
 - The application Ref 160795, dated 10 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 29 April 2016.
 - The development proposed is for the erection of a garden room to the rear of existing dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a garden room to the rear of existing dwelling at Yew Tree House, Stretton Grandison, Ledbury, Herefordshire HR8 2TS in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 160795, dated 10 March 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: MA16.01.01; MA16.01.02 and MA16.01.03.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Preliminary matter

2. The Council in its decision notice refers to a heritage related development plan policy (Herefordshire Local Plan (HLP) Policy LD4) whilst pointing out in the officer report that the proposal would have a marginal impact on the setting of Stretton Court a listed building 46m to the east. No further explanation of likely effects on the setting of the listed building is offered. Being mindful of the statutory duty in respect of the setting of this heritage asset, I consider that the proposal would not be harmful to the setting of Stretton Court. By the same token, as the proposal would not be viewed in context with the nearby barn and listed building, I also consider that the rear extension would not harm the setting of this heritage asset.
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Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is situated within a group of dwellings that have either been converted (in the case of the listed barn) or recently constructed in a traditional manner as is the case with the host property. Three houses have been erected immediately to the east of the barn with access through the courtyard to that property.
5. The appeal property is located within the designated Stretton Grandison Conservation Area (CA) whose significance is derived from a loose knit development pattern radiating from the church and around the former manor house. Properties generally sit in spacious plots and most of the newer houses are built in traditional style with narrow gables and steeply pitched roofs. Plots here benefit from a mature verdant setting.
6. The proposal would see the erection of a single storey extension to the rear of the property, which would infill the area formed by the existing two storey gable projection. The extension would be set back from the end gable of the main part of the house and incorporate a flat roof parapet with a small glazed lantern to provide additional natural light into the extension.
7. HLP Policy SD1 amongst other things seeks to ensure that new developments are well designed to maintain local distinctiveness through local architectural detailing whilst respecting scale, height, proportions and massing of surrounding development. Whilst recognising that flat roofed designs can be harmful, particularly if they comprise prominent elements in the street scene or significantly undermine the architectural integrity of the host building, I do not believe that such situations apply in this case. The extension with its set back would be subservient to the main building and would not extend beyond the rear building line. Moreover, existing vegetation and screening would mean that the extension would not be visible from any public vantage point. Accordingly, I am satisfied that the proposal would accord with HLP Policy SD1.
8. In exercising my duties in relation to heritage assets, given the modest size and discreet location of the proposed extension, I am satisfied that the development would preserve the character and appearance of the CA. Consequently the development would not be harmful in terms of the CA's significance and would not therefore be contrary to HLP Policy LD4 in terms of protecting heritage assets.

Conditions

9. I have paid due regard to the advice contained within the Planning Practice Guidance. A condition is imposed that specifies the commencement period and the approved plans in the interests of certainty. A further condition is imposed requiring matching materials.

Conclusion

10. Having regard to the above reasons and all other matters raised I conclude that this appeal should be allowed.

Gareth W Thomas

Inspector