
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 October 2016

by Jameson Bridgwater DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 15 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/F1610/W/16/3150992

Yew Tree Cottages, Victoria Road, Quenington, Gloucestershire GL7 5BW

- 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 Jeremy Lindon against the decision of Cotswold District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01197/FUL, dated 22 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 18 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Erection of dwelling at Land Adjacent To Yew Tree Cottages'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Quenington Conservation Area (CA), and the significance of the setting of the Grade II Listed Building Yew Tree Cottage.

Reasons

3. The Quenington CA is characterised by a historic village core with the built form generally of domestic scale/two-storey in height; constructed predominantly from stone, with many of the buildings having stone slate roofs. The village occupies an elevated position above the River Coin. Moreover, to the north and the east, the CA is bounded by the river and is open in character with a number of wooded copses. In particular the open, verdant nature of the land to the east of Victoria Road, in conjunction with the elevated position of the village core and green open areas alongside the river bed create a setting in which to appreciate the architecture and historic setting of the village, the conservation area as a whole and the setting of the Grade II Listed Building, Yew Tree Cottage.
 4. It therefore rests with me as the decision maker to apply the intended protection for heritage assets as specified in section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) and also to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA in accordance with section 72 (1) of the Act.
 5. The appeal site occupies an elevated position above Victoria Road and there are a number of mature and semi-mature trees that form a backcloth to the
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rear boundary of the site which are a component part of the setting of the historic settlement. Access would be gained via the existing garages/carports that are constructed into the sloping valley side. The proposal is to erect a two-storey single dwelling in the garden of the Grade II Listed Yew Tree Cottages. It is proposed to partly set the dwelling into the natural slope of the garden.

6. I have carefully considered the appellant's representations in relation to the proposal including the computer generated images of the proposal in situ, plot boundaries, the overall design rationale and I have viewed the site from a number of vantage points on and around the site. However, the introduction of the proposed dwelling would visually close the gap between the Yew Tree Cottage and Bankview and interrupt views to the verdant tree line behind the site. This would result in a change in the character of the immediate area, introducing a denser pattern of development alien to the largely spacious and verdant character of east side of Victoria Road. Furthermore, whilst I accept that the proposal seeks to achieve a contemporary design solution; the overall size, arrangement and solid to void ratio of the windows on the principle elevation would appear incongruous when compared to the prevailing modest window arrangements within Victoria Road, a component part of the CA. Consequently the siting and design of the proposed dwelling would result in material harm to the setting of the Grade II Listed Yew Tree Cottage and consequently fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Quenington CA.
7. Therefore, when considered in the context of the setting of Yew Tree Cottage and Quenington CA as a whole, the degree of harm to its character and appearance would be less than substantial. I recognise there would be some benefits; a new residential dwelling would provide a small boost to the supply of housing, as well as further economic benefit of employment during construction. However, having found harm to the heritage assets, I must give that harm considerable importance and weight. In balancing the harm against the wider public benefits, therefore, the harm is not outweighed.
8. Having come to the conclusions above, it follows that the proposal would fail to preserve the character or appearance of the Quenington Conservation Area, and the significance of the setting of the Grade II Listed Yew Tree Cottage. The proposal would therefore be in conflict with Policies 15 and 42 of the Cotswold District Local Plan. These seek amongst other things to ensure that new development respects and complements the characteristics of the site and its surroundings; and the historic scale and context of the setting. These objectives are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conclusion

9. For the above reasons and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Jameson Bridgwater

INSPECTOR