

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 November 2016

by Andrew Owen BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 22 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/J9497/D/16/3158657

**Little Barton, Road from Hooks Cross to Caton Cross, Caton, Ashburton
TQ13 7EX**

- 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 R Small against the decision of Dartmoor National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref 0324/16, dated 4 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 6 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is an extension to provide ancillary accommodation and a conservatory.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The building at the site comprises the farmhouse at Little Barton Farm. It forms one of a small cluster of mainly agricultural buildings located on a generally south-east facing hillside. It appears prominently in the landscape when viewed from the south-east, including from the A38.
 4. The farmhouse is a bungalow with a pitched roof in the centre and with flat roofed additions to its south and west sides. The proposed extensions would comprise a first floor addition over the western flat roof and a conservatory on the east elevation.
 5. The highest part of the first floor extension would be significantly higher than the existing pitched roof. Due to this, and its higher eaves level, contrasting materials and west facing gable, the form and design of the extension would not reflect that of the existing house. Also the development would fail to integrate well with the host dwelling particularly with respect to the forms of the existing and proposed roofs. Instead the extension would appear as an awkward and incongruous addition.
 6. The extension would be lower than the barns just to the west of the house and comparable in height to the barn to the south and therefore would not appear
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prominently from views from the south or west. But from other directions, particularly from the south-east, the first floor extension would appear as a prominent and inharmonious development.

7. Additionally, by virtue of its size, the first floor extension would overwhelm the original building. It is not disputed by the parties that the floor area of the proposal would exceed the 30% threshold for extensions as set out in Policy DMD24 of the Development Management and Delivery (DMD) Development Plan Document. I note the appeal decision relating to 11 Manor Drive¹ where an extension which breached this 30% threshold was permitted. However, in that instance the Inspector considered the extension would be hardly distinguishable from the original dwelling. That would not be the case in the proposal before me. Likewise the extensions at Ilex House appear to integrate well with the existing dwelling, unlike the proposed development.
8. I acknowledge the existing flat roofs do not make a positive contribution to the appearance of the bungalow. However this does not justify the replacement of one of them with an extension that would also be unsympathetic to the host property and would be more visually prominent. Similarly whilst the existing flat roofs may be in need of repair and the replacement of one might provide advantages in energy efficiency, I do not consider this outweighs the harm the proposal would cause to the character and appearance of the area.
9. The Town Council support the proposal, notably on the basis that the existing dwelling is small. I have no evidence to suggest that the existing accommodation is too small to meet the appellant's needs and whilst I give some weight to the improvement the proposal would make to the quality of the accommodation at the site, it does not outweigh the harm identified above.
10. In conclusion, due to its design, form and size, the first floor extension would appear as an incongruous addition to the bungalow and consequently would harm the character and appearance of the area. As such it would fail to accord with Policies COR1 and COR4 of the Core Strategy and Policy DMD7 of the DMD document which all require development to have a high standard of design. It would also conflict with Policy DMD1b of the DMD document which aims to ensure development does not detract from the special qualities of the National Park, and Policy DMD24 of the DMD document which expects extensions to not adversely affect the appearance of the host dwelling. The development would also fail to accord with the general guidance in the Dartmoor National Park Design Guide and the design principles in the National Planning Policy Framework and the English National Parks and the Broads UK Government Vision and Circular 2010.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, and taking account of all other considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR

¹ APP/J9497/D/15/3130873