
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 January 2017

by Paul Singleton BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 31st January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/H1033/D/16/3162063

Woodside Cottage, Little Padfield Road, Little Padfield, Glossop SK13 1EW

- 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 Philip Robinson against the decision of High Peak Borough Council.
 - The application Ref HPK/2016/0374, dated 30 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 20 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is full height side extension to existing house, including side extension of existing rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - (a) Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and, if so, whether the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm would be clearly outweighed by other considerations; and
 - (b) The effect on the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings having regard to its location within the open countryside and the Padfield Conservation Area.

Reasons

Green Belt

3. Policy EQ4 of the High Peak Local Plan (Local Plan), adopted in 2016, states that the Council will protect the Green Belt and that planning permission will not be granted for development in the Green Belt unless it is in accordance with national planning policy. The relevant national policy is comprised within section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework). Paragraph 89 of the Framework states that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate and sets out a limited number of exceptions to this general presumption.
 4. The third bullet of paragraph 89 provides that the extension or alteration of a building is not inappropriate development provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. The
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glossary to the Framework advises that the term 'original building' is defined as a building as it existed on 1 July 1948.

5. The planning officer's report identifies that the floor area of the original cottage on the appeal site has been increased by around 88% as a result of previous extensions carried out and it is clear from the planning history recorded in that report that most of these extensions post-date 1 July 1948. I agree with the Council that, in conjunction with these previous additions, the appeal proposal (together representing an increase of about 128% in the original floor area) would result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Hence, the proposal does not fall within the scope of the exception set out in the third bullet of paragraph 89 and would be inappropriate development. Paragraph 87 states that inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
6. Although the cottage stands in a relatively large plot the proposed extension would have an adverse effect on the current openness of the eastern part of that plot which is currently free of any buildings or structures. When seen by anyone approaching on Little Padfield Road from the south west the proposal would partially close off the exiting medium distance views towards the mature trees around the next group of buildings and of the intervening pasture land and would fully close off any views into the rear garden of the cottage. The existing gable wall to the cottage is central in views when coming down the hill from north east and the proposed extension would significantly increase the dominance of the building in those views. By extending the building up to the site boundary the proposal would significantly diminish the sense of openness at the front corner of the plot. It would also render the building much more prominent in the views enjoyed by anyone leaving the public footpath from the south east to join Little Padfield Road.
7. Taking these considerations into account I find the proposal would have a significant adverse effect on the openness of the Green Belt in this location. Paragraph 88 of the Framework states that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt and advises that 'very special circumstances' will not exist unless the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Character and appearance

8. Little Padfield Lane is characterised by individual buildings or small groups of buildings standing in relative large plots and separated by intervening paddock and pasture land. This area stands separate from the main body of the village and has a distinctly rural character. Due to its substantial scale and long front elevation the existing cottage is relatively prominent in views from Little Padfield Road and from its junction with Redgate and Platter Street. Although it would be constructed at the same height and in materials to match the existing building, the proposed extension would add to that prominence and would cause some, albeit limited, harm to the predominantly open character of this part of the settlement. For this reason the proposal would conflict with Local Plan Policy EQ3 which seeks that development

outside of the settlement boundary should be strictly controlled in order to protect the landscape's intrinsic character.

9. The various extensions and external rendering of the property have made it difficult to discern the form and built envelope of the original cottage and to appreciate its 18th Century origin although it still reads as a cottage of considerable age and as a long standing part of the settlement. The appellant contends that the proposal would restore the symmetry lost as a result of past extensions. However, I am not persuaded that there would be any significant design merit in such an outcome and I consider that the proposal would further diminish the remaining historic interest and value of the building and the contribution that it makes to the character and appearance of the Padfield Conservation Area. In accordance with the duty, under section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of such areas, considerable importance and weight must be given to that harm to the conservation area.
10. Accordingly, I find that the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area and that it would conflict with Local Plan Policy EQ7 which seeks to ensure that development proposals contribute positively to the character and appearance of the historic environment and that heritage assets are conserved.

Conclusions

11. For the reasons set out above I find that the appeal proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and would have a significant adverse effect on the openness of the Green Belt. I also find that it would fail to preserve or enhanced the character and appearance of the conservation area and would cause some limited harm to the predominantly open landscape character of this part of the settlement.
12. The proposal benefits the appellant in respect of the additional living accommodation it would provide but this is a private benefit which can be afforded very little weight. No other benefits or considerations have been put forward which would clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and the other harm that I have identified.
13. I therefore find that the very special circumstances which would be required to justify a grant of planning permission have not been demonstrated and that the proposal conflicts with the policies in section 9 of the Framework and with Local Plan Policy EQ4. For these reasons and having regard to all matters raised I conclude that the appeal should fail.

Paul Singleton

INSPECTOR