
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 January 2017

by Jonathan Manning BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 06 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W1145/D/16/3164584

Little Kersham, Bridge Reeve, Chulmleigh, Devon, EX18 7BD

- 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 Richard Quinn against the decision of Torridge District Council.
 - The application Ref 1/0833/2016/FUL, dated 16 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 13 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is single storey oak framed orangery extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The appellant has raised concern that the Council failed to follow the advice in Paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which relates to proactive engagement. However, whilst this matter is noted, it falls outside of the remit of this appeal decision. Such concerns should be taken up with the Council.

Main Issues

3. The main issue of the appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located in the village of Bridge Reeve and currently accommodates a detached dwelling. The appeal property was created in 1989, when it was converted from a barn/stables. I understand that the dwelling previously formed part of a courtyard area associated with the Grade II listed Bridge Farm. However, in more recent times both the appeal property and the neighbouring property Kersham House were converted to dwellings and I observed that they have their own associated curtilages, although they do share the same access drive to the local highway. A public right of way runs through the appeal site. The appeal site is located in a designated Area of Great Landscape Value.
 5. It was evident that the appeal property has a distinctive 'L' shape and has limited openings, particularly along the southern wall where the proposed orangery would be located. I consider that the appeal property's layout and form contributes strongly to its character and appearance and are indicative of
-

its historic and traditional context. Whilst appearing subservient, the proposed orangery would nonetheless alter the 'L' shaped layout of the property, which I consider is a very important contributor to its traditional character and appearance and I agree with the Council that this would be to the detriment of the property.

6. In addition, the proposed single storey oak framed orangery would, in my view, have an overly modern appearance, which I consider would be out of keeping with the appeal property. This is because the large areas of glazing and modern roof lantern would be in direct contrast to the limited openings that help to retain the traditional appearance of the building. This would be despite the fact that access between the existing building and the proposed orangery would be located where there are already window openings.
7. I acknowledge that the proposed orangery would not be largely visible from the surrounding area or the public right of way, due to its siting. However, I am not of the view that this justifies the approval of a scheme that would be harmful to the host dwelling and does not represent good design as required by the Framework.
8. I accept that the appeal property is now an individual dwelling set within its own curtilage with boundary treatment that visually separates it from the Grade II listed Bridge Farm and does not form part of its setting. I agree with the parties that the proposal would not cause harm to the setting of Bridge Farm and I do not share the concerns of the Council about residential activity shifting to the southern side of the dwelling. Further, I acknowledge that there would be no harm caused to the designated Area of Great Landscape Value. However, such matters do not in any way overcome my above concerns.
9. For the reasons set out above, I consider that the proposal would cause harm to the traditional character and appearance of the host dwelling. The proposal therefore runs contrary to Policies DVT6 and DVT7 of the Torridge District Local Plan (2004) (the LP). I consider that these policies are broadly consistent with the Framework and therefore carry significant weight (Paragraph 215). In summary, these policies seek to ensure that development: maintains, restores, or enhances the local vernacular and sense of place through appropriate layout, design, materials and landscaping; and is compatible with the context within which it is set and has taken account of the following aspects of development form: layout, landscaping, density, range of uses, height, massing and appearance.
10. I also consider that the proposal runs contrary to the Council's Supplementary Guidance Note 2 - Conversion of Traditional Rural Buildings (the SPG). Whilst this is dated, there is no evidence before me to suggest that it should not carry some weight. This sets out that the individual character of traditional farm buildings makes it important to avoid any alien additions or extensions unless exceptionally justified. I am not of the view that there are any exceptional circumstances in this case. The SPG also emphasises that the original form of traditional buildings are of paramount importance, when considering extensions.
11. The Council has referred to Policy HSC4 of the LP in their reason for refusal. However, as stated in the supporting text to the policy it is not relevant to the extension of rural historic building conversions. Notwithstanding this, given the

other development policies of relevance, this has not had a significant bearing on my decision.

Other matters

12. I accept that the proposal would be constructed from an oak frame sourced from well managed renewable forests and that it would face south to take advantage of solar gain and would also include wide opening bi-folding doors and opening lights to the roof lantern for natural ventilation/cooling. Further, I acknowledge that sustainable surface water drainage methods would be used. However, I consider that such matters individually or in combination are not sufficient to outweigh the identified harm.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised, there are no material considerations that outweigh the identified harm and the associated development plan conflict. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Jonathan Manning

INSPECTOR