
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 11 January 2017

by David Richards B Soc Sci DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 10 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W0340/W/16/3159054

Bridgemans, Lower Green, Inkpen, Berkshire, RG17 9DW

- 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 Stephen Evans against the decision of West Berkshire Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01120/HOUSE, dated 26 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is extension to provide family room, kitchen, bathroom, utility room and detached garden room.
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Appeal Ref: APP/W0340/Y/16/3159103

Bridgemans, Lower Green, Inkpen, Berkshire, RG17 9DW

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Stephen Evans against the decision of West Berkshire Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01121/LBC2, dated 26 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 July 2016.
 - The works proposed are extension to provide family room, kitchen, bathroom, utility room and detached garden room.
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Decisions

Appeal Ref: APP/W0340/W/16/3159054

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for extension to provide family room, kitchen, bathroom, utility room and detached garden room at Bridgemans, Lower Green, Inkpen, Berkshire, RG17 9DW in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/01120/HOUSE, dated 26 April 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the design and access statement, heritage statement and drawings 3020.P.SK02; 3020.P.100; 3020.P. 102; 3020.P.103; 3020.P.104; and 3020.P.106 received on 9 May 2016, and drawing 3020.P.107 received on 15 June 2016.
 - 3) Notwithstanding what is shown on the elevation drawings the extension hereby approved shall be no greater than 6.2 metres in height

- to the top of the roof ridge. The height shall be taken from the proposed ground levels shown on drawing 3020.P.107 received on 15 June 2016.
- 4) The extension hereby permitted shall be used as an integral part of the existing dwelling. The extension shall not be used at any time other than for purposes incidental/ancillary to the residential use of the dwelling known as Bridgemans. The development shall not be used as a separate dwelling unit, no separate curtilage shall be created, and no trade, business or commercial enterprise of any kind whatsoever shall be carried on, in or from the extension.
 - 5) No development shall take place until full details of how all spoil arising from the development will be used and/or disposed of have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall:
 - (a) Show where any spoil to remain on the site will be deposited;
 - (b) Include measures to remove all spoil (not to be deposited) from the site;
 - (c) Include timescales for the depositing/removal of spoil. All spoil arising from the development shall be used and/or disposed of in accordance with the approved details.
 - 6) No development of the garden outbuilding hereby approved, site clearance and/or other preparatory works to the garden shed shall take place until an arboricultural method statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The statement shall include details of the implementation, supervision and monitoring of all temporary tree protection, details of the foundations and any special construction works within any defined tree protection area. Thereafter the development shall incorporate and be undertaken in accordance with the approved statement.
 - 7) As a first development operation of the extension hereby approved the car port structure, outbuilding and single storey element to the listed building identified on drawing 3020.100 received on 9 May 2016 shall be demolished and removed from site. The car port is shown as a black partially dashed line to the south boundary of the site and west of outbuilding labelled B1. Within 3 months of the completion of the extension hereby approved the shipping container identified to the west boundary of the site on drawing 3020.100 shall be removed from the site. Thereafter the area of land on site between the front elevation of the dwelling and the highway shall be kept clear of any temporary structures.

Appeal Ref: APP/W0340/Y/16/3159103

2. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted for extension to provide family room, kitchen, bathroom, utility room and detached garden room at Bridgemans, Lower Green, Inkpen, Berkshire, RG17 9DW in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 16/01121/LBC2, dated 26 April 2016 subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

- 2) This listed building consent relates only to work described on the drawings and/or in the documents identified below received on 9 May 2016, Drawing numbers: 3020.P.SK02; 3020.P.100; 3020.P.102; 3020.P.103; 3020.P.104; 3020.P.106; 3020.P.107 (received on 15 June 2016); Heritage Statement; Design and Access Statement.

No work shall be carried out other than in accordance with the above drawings and documents.
- 3) No development shall take place until samples and an accompanying schedule of all materials and visible finishes external to the building have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All materials incorporated in the work shall match the approved samples.
- 4) No development shall take place until details of all new windows/areas of glazing/external doors, including materials and finishes, at a minimum scale of 1:20 and 1:2, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The windows/areas of glazing/external doors shall be installed in accordance with the approved details.
- 5) No development shall take place until full details of the thatch, including ridge details, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall incorporate and be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.
- 6) All works of making good and repair to the retained fabric, whether internal or external, shall be finished to match original/adjacent work with regard to the methods used and to materials, colours, textures and profiles.
- 7) No development shall take place until details of services external to the building, including the type and location of any new or modified services, drainage pipework (including soil vent pipe terminations) and accessories, rainwater goods, boiler flues, extract vent grilles, meter cupboards, external lighting, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the new or modified external services shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained as installed.

Main Issue

3. The main issues in both appeals are the effects of the proposals on the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building, on the character and appearance of the surrounding area of Inkpen, on the living conditions of neighbours at Holly Tree Cottage and on trees and hedgerows.

Reasons

4. The development plan includes the saved policies of the West Berkshire District Local Plan (LP) and the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006 – 2016 (CS).

5. Saved policy ENV.24 of the LP allows for the extension of houses in the countryside, subject to considerations of detailed design, materials, scale, character and effect on amenity including that it shall be of permanent construction, in keeping with the design of the existing dwelling using complementary materials, not have materially greater or more harmful impact on the rural character of the area, and not result in an extended dwelling disproportionate to the size of the original.
6. Policy CS 14 requires that development proposals must demonstrate high quality and sustainable design that respects and enhances the quality of life in West Berkshire, and should conserve and enhance historic assets. Policy CS 18 resists development that would lead to loss of green infrastructure or harm to its use or enjoyment by the public. Policy CS 19 seeks to ensure that the diversity and distinctiveness of the landscape character of the District is conserved and enhanced.
7. I have also had regard to the Supplementary Planning Guidance: Replacement Dwellings and Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside 2004 (SPG). It advises that an increase in floorspace of more than 50% would generally be regarded as disproportionate although development could be acceptable depending on the site characteristics, scale and massing.

Effect on listed and buildings and character and appearance of surroundings

8. Bridgemans is a Grade II listed timber-framed thatched cottage dating from the 16/17 centuries. The dwelling is modest in appearance, constructed in vernacular building techniques and materials, notably the timber frame and thatched roof. It contains a number of additions and outbuildings to the south and east. In my judgement there is no objection to the demolition of these outbuildings, which are not original and which are neither integral nor particularly complementary to the main dwelling. As such, they do not contribute to the significance of the listed building.
9. The applications sought planning permission and listed building consent for a single storey extension, connected to the southern side of the cottage by a glazed link. A detached garden room is proposed to the far end of the rear garden. The glazed link would separate the main dwelling from the proposed extension by 2 metres at its closest point. The extension would be set back from the front elevation of the main dwelling by 2.2 metres. The external materials proposed are horizontal timber cladding with thatched roof to the main part of the extension. The bedroom at the end would be clad in zinc with a tile roof.
10. The appeal scheme has been amended from an earlier scheme for which permission was refused, including a reduction in the length of the extension adjacent to the boundary by nearly 2 metres, which in turn reduces the overall scale and massing. The extension has also been set back a further 2 metres, in order to reduce the impact on the listed building, and the increase in footprint has been reduced by nearly 10%.
11. In my judgement, the proposed extension has been sensitively designed to respect the character, proportions, scale and materials of the original house. The extension would be subservient in scale and set back from the frontage to reduce impact in comparison with an earlier design. The use of a glass link between the old and new elements has a 'neutral' modern appearance which

successfully preserves the distinction between the historic fabric of the original building and the attractive complementary design of the proposed extension. I agree with the view expressed in the Council's committee report that 'the revised proposal would not cause any harm to the special character of the Grade II listed building in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework and CS Policies CS14 and CS19.'

12. Concern was expressed by Committee members that the proposal would be out of character with the more spacious character of nearby housing and the plots in which they are set. In my judgement the proposed extension, which would be accompanied by the demolition of other extensions and outbuildings, would not have a material adverse effect on the character of the surroundings. The building would be well proportioned and utilise materials which are appropriate to the setting of the listed building. While I acknowledge that there is a diversity in the plot size of nearby dwellings, there is no obvious pattern that would be disrupted by the proposed extension.
13. I note that the increase in floorspace would be a little more than the 50% guideline in the SPG. However in view of my conclusion on the design of the extension, I do not consider that it would represent a disproportionate increase, having regard to the particular characteristics of the site.
14. Concern was also expressed that the proposals would interfere with the view of the historic barn complex from the public footpath which runs in part alongside the garden to the rear of Bridgemans. I acknowledge that Bridgemans and the adjacent barns appear to have been part of the same group originally making up a historic farmstead. However while the physical relationship between the buildings remains, ownership and use of the barns has changed substantially in the past. In my judgement, the appeal proposal would not result in any further harm to the significance of the original grouping. While the attractive view from the footpath would change, significant and attractive glimpses of the barn complex would be retained, between the rearmost element of the extension and the free-standing garden room. I consider that the change to the view of the barn complex would not be a sufficient reason to withhold permission for the proposal.
15. In summary, I do not consider that the proposal would result in harm to the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building, or the character and appearance of the surroundings. The extension would be a well-designed and well-proportioned subordinate structure which would not detract from the setting of the listed building or its surroundings.

Effect on the living conditions of neighbours

16. The extension would be close to the boundary with Holly Tree Cottage, and concern has been expressed that it would appear dominant and overbearing, particularly when viewed from the rear of the cottage, as well as resulting in loss of light and sunlight.
17. The ground on which the existing fence stands rises slightly to the south of the proposed extension. The ridge of the proposed extension would rise to a maximum of some 6.2 metres in height. Drawing 3020.P.SK01 shows that the thatched roof would not exceed 4 metres in height within 2 metres of the fence line. The use of hips at either end of the main part of the extension would

further minimise the extent to which the extension would impact on the amenity of neighbours.

18. With regard to privacy, no windows are proposed in the south elevation. The window in the west elevation would be set low in the building and under overhanging eaves. Given the relationship between this window and the boundary fence, and the oblique line of sight between it and the upstairs bedroom window in the Holly Tree Cottage, I do not consider that there would be any significant potential for intervisibility between the windows, or loss of privacy for the neighbours. With regard to daylight and sunlight, the garden of Holly Tree Cottage lies to the south of the proposed extension. To my mind the distance between the existing fence and the ridge of the proposed extension, together with the use of hipped roofs, would ensure that there would be no significant impact as regards daylight and sunlight.
19. For these reasons I do not consider that the proposals would result in conflict with Policies CS 14 or CS 19, or the advice in the SPG. I note the concern that construction methods may in practice demand a higher ridge. However, a condition could be attached to ensure that this parameter would not be exceeded.

Effect on trees and hedges

20. At the time of the site visit, much of the hedgerow on the boundary had been removed, though a short stretch of holly hedge had been retained. However, as the Appellant points out, there are no Tree Preservation Orders on the site, and the site does not lie within a conservation area. In my view the boundary between the two properties is not of any great significance for the rural ambience of this part of Inkpen, and the removal of the hedgerow has not resulted in any material harm. With regard to the affected tree, it lies within the garden of Holly Tree Cottage. While there may be some interference with the root ball, I agree with the assessment of the Council's Tree Officer that minor incursions into the rooting area can be tolerated, and that the protection of the tree from the effects of construction could be secured by condition.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons given I conclude that there would be no material harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building, the character and appearance of the surroundings, the living conditions of neighbours or to trees and hedgerows. The proposals would be substantially in accordance with the relevant policies of the development plan and with advice in the SPG and the National Planning Policy Framework. Accordingly, I will allow the appeals.
22. In addition to the time limit conditions, conditions specifying the plans to be complied with are necessary to define the scope of the permissions and in the interests of proper planning. Conditions dealing with materials (including thatch and door /window details, the height of the proposed extension, the landscaping of the site and the removal of specified buildings and the shipping container, the removal of spoil from the site, making good the fabric and details of services/fittings are needed to ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and also that the scheme respects the character of the listed building, surrounding area and the living conditions of neighbours. Conditions addressing the protection of any trees affected by the proposals are necessary to avoid harm to the trees as a result of the approved works. A condition

linking the use of the extension to the main dwelling and restricting the use to residential is necessary to secure the character and amenity of the area.

David Richards

INSPECTOR