

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 February 2017

by Amanda Blicq BSc (Hons) MA CMLI

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

Decision date: 24th February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Y2810/D/17/3167416

Christmas Cottage, Hothorpe, Marston Trussell LE17 6QX

- 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 and Mrs Rogers against the decision of Daventry District Council.
 - The application Ref DA/2016/0759, dated 3 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 9 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is two storey side and rear extension, single storey rear extension and new detached garage/store.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for two storey side and rear extension, single storey rear extension and new detached garage/store at Christmas Cottage, Hothorpe, Marston Trussell LE17 6QX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DA/2016/0759, dated 3 August 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 permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 3497 – 01; 3497 – 02; 3497 – 03; 3497 – 04; 3497 – 05a; 3497 – 06a; 3497 – 07a; 3497 – 08a.
 - 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural Matters

2. During the appeal I confirmed that the drawings upon which the appeal is to be determined are those that formed part of the original application, namely those listed in condition 2. Although amended plans have been submitted which present an alternative scheme, the evidence before me indicates that the appeal is to be determined on the original scheme. As such I have not considered the alternative scheme in my reasoning.
 3. The evidence before me indicates that there is an extant permission for a two storey rear extension. However, limited details have been supplied and having reviewed the cases from both main parties I have concluded that this is not determinative to this appeal and I have not considered it further.
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Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. Christmas Cottage is one of a pair of modest period chalet-style detached cottages situated in a predominantly rural landscape to the south of Theddingworth. They appear to have been built in a simple Arts and Crafts style. There is another pair of period detached cottages, built in a contrasting style, nearby.
6. Both Christmas Cottage (the cottage) and its neighbour, Sunnie Brae, have retained much of their original character through the retention of their original front elevations with gable ends above sections of bellcast roof, that also run along both flank elevations. There are also narrow flared buttresses on the corners of their front elevations. The cottage has existing extensions in the form of a rear conservatory, as well as a single storey projection that wraps around the rear elevation and extends partway along its northern flank wall. Sunnie Brae has also been extended, with a two storey extension that continues the gable roof form to the rear but which also has large gable style dormers.
7. The development would comprise two storey rear and side extensions, both of which would provide their second storey accommodation within roof space. The single storey projection which appears as a rather untidy and incongruous addition to the cottage would be removed, and the conservatory's footprint would be subsumed into the overall development. The Council argues that although the rear extension would be acceptable on its own, the side extension would have a significant visual impact that would detract from the symmetry, form and character of the cottages. Given that the Council has not objected to the rearward extension as such, I have confined my reasoning to the side extension although I have been mindful that the quantum of development proposed would include the rearward extension.
8. The side extension would be set back from the cottage's front elevation by some 4 -5 metres. This would enable the retention of the cottage's front elevation as well as a reasonable section of the flank walls on either side. The side extension would have a ridgeline slightly lower than that of the host dwelling, and would retain the simplicity of the double pitched roof that currently characterises the cottage. The extension would also have flared buttresses on the corners of the gable end.
9. There would be a degree of visual separation between the original features of the cottage's distinctive front elevation and the proposed side extension. This would safeguard the visual impact and the setting of the front elevation's character and detailing. The symmetry of detail and form between the front elevations of the cottage and Sunnie Brae, which are the most visible from the road, would be retained.
10. As such, although I appreciate that the side extension would be of significant size, I disagree with the Council that it would detract either from the cottage or such symmetry as there is with Sunnie Brae.

11. The Council also argues that the design and materials of the proposed garage would detract from the setting of the cottages. The garage would be partially screened from the road by the frontage hedge and by rising ground. Although I appreciate that a half hipped roof would not be entirely sympathetic to the local vernacular I am not satisfied that it would be sufficient to warrant dismissal of the appeal in the absence of other concerns.
12. It is proposed to use oak cladding to face the garage's walls which the Council considers inappropriate. However, the Council has not suggested an appropriate alternative, were the appeal to be allowed. As such, given the rural setting, and on the basis of the evidence before me, I am not persuaded that oak cladding would be inappropriate.
13. In the light of the above, I find no conflict with Policy HS24 of the Local Plan¹ (LP) which states in its supporting text, (rather than the policy itself), that extensions to existing dwellings in the countryside should respect the character and scale of the original dwelling and should still be a recognised part of the extended building. Nor do I find conflict with the design aims of LP Policy EN24 which seek to ensure development blends in within the site and its surroundings.

Conditions

14. I have considered the conditions put forward by the Council against the requirements of the national Planning Practice Guidance and the Framework. In respect of the plans, I have imposed a condition specifying the drawings upon which I have based this appeal, as this provides certainty.
15. I have also imposed a condition ensuring that the materials used match those of the host building to safeguard the appearance of the area. Where necessary and in the interests of clarity and precision I have altered the conditions to better reflect the relevant guidance.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above and taking all matters into account, I conclude that the development would not be contrary to the relevant policies of the Council's Local Plan and that therefore the appeal should be allowed.

Amanda Blicq

INSPECTOR

¹ Daventry