
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 July 2017

by Andy Harwood CMS MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 03 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/P1133/W/17/3173126

Westborough Cottage, Combeinteignhead, Devon TQ12 4RG

- 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 G Cooper-Smith against the decision of Teignbridge District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/03144/FUL, dated 25 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 24 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is a detached garage with office over.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Council's report refers to plan CMTG/0078/16/1 RevA which is the plan upon which the decision was based. I will consider the appeal on the basis of that plan.
3. There is some confusion about the address of the property. The detached garage would be intended for use with Orchard Cottage rather than Westborough Cottage. The error made on the planning application forms, has been repeated on other correspondence including the appeal form and is only clarified within the appellant's appeal statement. I have continued to use the address used on the original application to save even further confusion as this was the basis upon which the public consultation was undertaken.

Main Issue

4. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is located within a pleasant, largely undeveloped rural area beyond the main built part of Combeinteignhead. The garage is partly constructed up to first-floor joist level and is tucked away behind a robust roadside hedge which is a little higher than the existing timberwork. The proposal would involve extending up substantially from the current height with rendered walls and a pitched, slate roof with mitred hips at one end and a gable at the other end. A dormer would protrude to the northern side with large windows facing towards the field on that side.

6. The garage is closer to Orchard Cottage than Westborough Cottage which is a significant distance to the north east of the part-constructed building. Westborough Cottage is within the built up part of the village whereas the building is within the rural fringes of the settlement. The dense hedge alongside the road continues all the way along to the entrance of Westborough Cottage. The site when viewed from the road currently has a largely undeveloped appearance as the building and stored items around it are screened by the hedge. The timber gates are visible only fleetingly as one passes-by which does not detract from the sensitive largely undeveloped gap between the cluster of dwellings near to Orchard Cottage and the start of the more built up part of the village.
7. From my consideration of the site it appears to me that the extension upwards would bring the structure partially above the level of the adjoining hedge and timber gates. The profile of the hedge did not appear as high as shown on the submitted drawing. I have taken that as an indicative illustration rather than accurate representation. The proposed gable end on the south-west side, the side of the roof and part of the side walls would be much more noticeable from the road. The shallow pitch and complicated roof arrangement would look obviously domestic in form. This would be an urbanising development at the sensitive fringe of Combeinteignhead. This would not respect the character of the undeveloped landscape in this location.
8. I have not been provided with the plans of the previously approved structure on this site. This means that I cannot make a true comparison between the respective proposals. I have taken into account that the ridge height would not change as stated by the appellant but have reached my view on the basis of the design shown on the submitted plans.
9. In relation to the main issue, the proposal would have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area. This would not protect, maintain or enhance the distinctive landscape of the area and would not satisfactorily respond to the characteristics of the site. The proposal would not comply with policies S1, S1A, S2 or EN2 of the Local Plan¹. This would constitute a poor design, not complying with paragraph 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
10. The need for additional office accommodation within the roof-space of the building is of limited weight. It does not outweigh the harm in relation to the main issue.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above and having considered all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andy Harwood

INSPECTOR

¹ Teighbridge Local Plan 2013-2033, adopted 6 May 2014