



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 August 2017

by David Cliff BA Hons MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 18th August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3825/D/17/3176884

**Woodshill House, Broadford Bridge Road, West Chiltington, Pulborough
RH20 2LD**

- 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 L Hoare against the decision of Horsham District Council.
 - The application Ref DC/17/0243, dated 3 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 30 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is erection of three bay garage with secure storage and log store.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are whether the proposed building would be acceptable in principle in this location, the effect on the rural character and appearance of the area and its effect upon the setting of Woodshill House as a Grade II listed building.

Reasons

3. In dismissing the appeal¹ for the previous proposal the Inspector considered that the ancillary residential accommodation proposed in that case would be tantamount to the creation of a potentially separate and independent dwelling. Furthermore the Inspector went on to have doubts as to whether a condition to prevent the creation of a separate dwelling would be reasonable and necessary given the tenuous relationship with Woodshill House in terms of the substantial distance, inconvenience of access and absence of a clear visual link.
4. The current appeal proposal does not include any ancillary residential accommodation, the proposed uses being parking, storage and a tack room. Although the Council is concerned that the space created could still be used for residential accommodation, this is not what is being proposed in this case.
5. The Council says in its Officer Report that the proposal would be located outside of the residential curtilage of the main dwellinghouse. From the evidence before me I also consider this appears to be the case, particularly given that the proposed building would be located beyond the boundary wall and on the opposite side along the access road. The appellant's ownership of

¹ APP/Z3825/D/16/3148081

the land and the positioning and use of the existing storage building does not alter my view in this respect. This is consistent with the findings of the previous Inspector.

6. Policy 28 of the Horsham District Planning Framework ('the HDPF') states that outside of the defined built-up areas, garages and any new outbuildings should have regard to the dwelling they serve and should be grouped with the house. Not only is the proposed development located beyond the boundary wall and on the other side of the access road, it would also be separated from the dwellinghouse by approximately 30m and it would not be visually read as being associated with Woodshill House. However, I note that the previous appeal Inspector stated that he had no objections to the storage and parking uses. However, in this case the proposal involves a larger area of storage space and the Council has raised concerns regarding its location outside of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse. I therefore find some limited harm to arise from the proposal's conflict with policy 28 of the HDPF in this respect. The key issue consequently arising is the effect of the proposal on character and appearance and the setting of the listed building.
7. In terms of appearance the previous Inspector found harm in terms of the large scale and quasi-residential character of the previously proposed building which would draw the eye in the approach from Broadford Bridge Road and appear incongruous in the context of the mostly utilitarian buildings. The current proposal, of a reduced size and without dormer windows has a less domestic and more agricultural appearance than the previous proposal. However, the proposed use for residential parking would still give it a somewhat residential character.
8. Whilst I acknowledge its decrease in size from the previous proposal, due to its height and substantial width the proposal would still amount to a building of considerable massing and would be very significantly larger than the existing storage building to be demolished. Whilst the existing storage building is partially concealed by the existing hedge, the proposed building would rise above it, in spite of it being set at a lower level than other buildings. In views from the access road I consider that it would appear as an excessively dominant structure in this location.
9. Although the proposal would be amongst a collection of other residential and agricultural buildings, I consider that its size and scale as a residential outbuilding would be excessive in this location. I have considered the existence of several other buildings in the vicinity of the appeal site. However, some of these are agricultural, including those to the rear of the site, which are of a use that is appropriate to the countryside location. Other buildings adjacent to the site are conversions. Whilst there are other residential buildings in the vicinity, I do not consider that they provide justification for further buildings of a non-agricultural use in this rural location, particularly of the size proposed in this case.
10. The proposal would screen the metal clad agricultural building to the rear though such a building, though not attractive is a functioning agricultural building that is expected in the countryside. In comparison, the appeal proposal would constitute an overly large domestic outbuilding that is not well connected with the dwellinghouse it serves.

11. The proposed development would therefore have a harmful impact upon the rural character and appearance of the site and its surroundings. There would also be an, albeit modest, adverse impact upon the setting of the listed Woodshill House given the harm that would result to the rural character of its surrounds. In the context of paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework such harm to the setting of the listed building would be less than substantial and there are no public benefits which would outweigh the harm caused.
12. The proposal would therefore conflict with the design and heritage aims of policies 26, 28, 33 and 34 of the HDPF and the National Planning Policy Framework.
13. I acknowledge the appellant's reasons for requiring the parking, storage and tack room within the proposed building, including a requirement for storage of equipment to maintain the gardens along with secure equestrian storage. It is not clear from the evidence provided that there are not viable alternative options to cater for such requirements. Whilst I have given this need some weight, it does not outweigh the significant harm I have found to arise from the excessive bulk and massing of the proposed building.
14. Whilst the existing storage building appears to be in need of repair and is not a building of any particular quality, this also does not justify the replacement building now proposed which is of significantly greater size.

Conclusion

15. The development would be contrary to the development plan when read as whole and I do not consider that other material considerations in this case outweigh the harm arising from the conflict with the development plan. The proposal would not therefore amount to sustainable development.
16. Therefore, having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Cliff

INSPECTOR