
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 October 2017

by S Jones MA DipLP

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

Decision date: 26 October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/G2713/D/17/3179854

South Thornborough Farm, Thirsk Road, Northallerton DL6 3SA

- 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 Clifford Pearson against the decision of Hambleton District Council.
 - The application Ref 17/00871/FUL, dated 19 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 16 June 2017.
 - The development is a treehouse.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have amended the original description of the development to reflect the fact that retention is not development, so I have removed those words. This has no effect on the development under consideration so that no prejudice arises to any party.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the treehouse on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. South Thornborough farm consists of a complex of farm buildings and a farmhouse in open countryside a short way from Northallerton. The roadway to the farm lies between two dwellings fronting onto the Thirsk Road, and the land rises gently up towards the farm complex, to which some holiday cabins have been added more recently.
5. A treehouse has been constructed on land next to the farmhouse, similar in style to the holiday cabins. It was in place at my site visit and consists of an empty summerhouse style building resting on parts of a tree trunk supported on a platform with props and a flight of steps up to a small verandah. Its use is not clear, but it appears to be part of the leisure offer onsite. However, it is not taller than the two storey adjacent farmhouse or buildings in the farm complex. It is some distance to any other property in all directions.
6. At this time of year the treehouse can only be glimpsed occasionally through the trees and hedging lining the Thirsk Road, mainly from the south and east

direction because there is a row of birch trees part way along the roadway close to it which partially screen it in other views. The present birch trees stop short of the treehouse location. I appreciate that tree screening could be increased closer to the treehouse as proposed by the appellant, but further trees would need to have some maturity to function effectively. Furthermore, open fields in gently rolling countryside surround it all year, and for a significant part of the year the deciduous screening provided by the side of the A168 road and at the farm would not be in leaf.

7. Consequently its prominence would become more pronounced. It would be readily visible across the fields and in the general views of the area, and would quite clearly be distinguished from the farm complex as it attracts attention due to its elevated position on its far edge. It is said the treehouse is by its very nature a temporary structure, but if a permanent planning permission were granted this would not be the case. Overall I find that the development has an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area because it appears incongruous due to its prominent location on the rising land and the edge of the farm complex.
8. It therefore conflicts with Policies CP1 CP16 and CP17 of the Hambleton District Council Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2007 and Policies DP30 and DP32 of the Hambleton District Council Development Policies Development Plan Document 2008 which amongst other things seek to secure high quality development that does not adversely impact the countryside or the landscape.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Jones

INSPECTOR