
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 January 2018

by H Baugh-Jones BA(Hons) DipLA MA CMLI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 January 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/J1860/D/17/3190209

Myrtle Cottage, Wichenford, WR6 6YY

- 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 Ombersely Design and Build Ltd against the decision of Malvern Hills District Council.
 - The application Ref 17/01384/HP, dated 23 August 2017, was refused by notice dated 23 November 2017.
 - The development proposed is single storey extension so as to create a courtyard layout.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for single storey extension so as to create a courtyard layout at Myrtle Cottage, Wichenford, WR6 6YY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 17/01384/HP, dated 23 August 2017, 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: un-numbered Location Plan; Existing Myrtle Site Drawing 1; Myrtle Cottage with proposed new extension Drawing 2; Proposed Extension Plan Drawing 3; Existing North and South Elevations Drawing 4; Existing East and West Elevations Drawing 5; Proposed North and South Elevations Drawing 6; Proposed East and West Elevations Drawing 7.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until sustainable surface water drainage works shall have been implemented in accordance with details that shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved drainage scheme shall be implemented before the development is brought into use.

Preliminary Matter

2. Notwithstanding the application date given in the heading above, the appellant submitted the relevant ownership certificate as part of the application on 12 September 2017. I refer to this only in the interests of clarity and it has no bearing on my consideration of the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building.

Reasons

4. The appeal property comprises a detached dwelling set within a substantial plot located on the north-western edge of Wichenford. The original red brick cottage has previously been extended so that it now has an 'L' shaped footprint. The appeal scheme would create a return at the end of the previous single-storey extension to create the proposed courtyard arrangement. Given the variation in local building styles in Wichenford and the rural surroundings, I do not consider that this proposed arrangement would be out of place.
5. It is clear that as a result of the previous extensions, the appearance of the original cottage has changed considerably. As such, its original character has been markedly diluted. It has a bulky presence in views from the street with the existing extension from its south-western corner appearing subordinate. The proposed extension would be of a single-storey and would also appear subordinate to the main part of the two-storey cottage.
6. Furthermore, the space around the dwelling, particularly to the south-east of it is sufficient to ensure the proposed extension would not result in the occupation of the site by a disproportionate amount of built form. Moreover, the presence of existing hedges and fences around the site and those of its immediate neighbours to the south-east would prevent any clear views of the proposed extension from public viewpoints.
7. In addition, I consider the proposal strikes a satisfactory balance between maintaining the overall appearance of the existing dwelling and providing a more flexible and usable space for its occupants.
8. The proposed extension would not have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and would thus accord with Policy SWDP 21 of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (2016), which amongst other things requires development to complement the character of the area, incorporate flexible designs in terms of internal spaces and extensions and be appropriate in terms of scale and massing. It would also accord with the general principles for extensions set out in the South Worcestershire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2018). For the same reasons, it would not conflict with national planning policy.

Conditions

9. I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawing as this provides certainty. As there is no public surface water sewer in the vicinity of the site, I have imposed a condition relating to surface water drainage. However, having regard to Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), I do not consider that this needs to be a pre-commencement condition. Although I have based the condition on the Council's suggested wording, I have amended it for clarity and to more closely reflect the Framework and the advice in PPG.

Conclusion

10. For the above reasons and having had regard to all other matters raised, the appeal succeeds.

Hayden Baugh-Jones

Inspector