



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 July 2019

by Mrs H Nicholls MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/J9497/D/19/3222438
Denver, Bridford Road, Christow EX6 7PG

- 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 Paul Carey against the decision of Dartmoor National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref 0522/18, dated 1 September 2018, was refused by notice dated 21 November 2018.
 - The development proposed is to extend house to form first floor over.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The existing dwelling is a bungalow located in a sparsely populated area of Dartmoor National Park. It is located close to a cluster of other dwellings, the majority of which appear to be two storeys in height. From the undisputed evidence before me, it would appear that the bungalow has been previously extended, having once been 68 sqm and currently in the region of 148 sqm. It is clear that the dwelling has a generous floorplan, though its hipped roof form helps to minimise its bulk when viewed from the rural road adjacent to the site.
4. Policy DMD24 of the Development Plan Document¹ (DMD) allows for residential extensions and alterations, considered individually and cumulatively with *previous* enlargements of the dwelling, subject to a range of design-related criteria. The policy also seeks to resist extensions where they exceed the 30% additional habitable floorspace, unless clear design considerations indicate otherwise. This is to ensure that the quality of the host dwelling and character and appearance of the area are not undermined by unsympathetic extensions.
5. The Authority indicate that the first floor extension proposed would amount to an 81% increase in floorspace. Notwithstanding the potential to deduct the garage floorspace from this calculation, the appellant does not dispute this figure but instead highlights a range of other permissions given for extensions where the 30% limit has been exceeded. I do not have full details of those cases before me to be certain whether there were 'clear design considerations'

¹Dartmoor National Park Authority Development Management and Delivery Development Plan Document (2013)

or other material considerations that supported the departure from the general approach in those instances.

6. The proposed first floor extension would be particularly large with room internally to provide four double bedrooms, a family bathroom and ensuite. From the roadside, it would present a widespan gabled frontage with a slightly recessed two storey wing to one side, and a long single storey element to the other. Due to the existing elongated form of the dwelling and the scale and form of the extension above part thereof, the resulting dwelling would have a bulky yet disjointed form. Whilst such a solution may be fairly typical in a suburban residential setting, in the context of the special qualities of the wider landscape surrounding the site, it would be noticeably bulky and lacking in locally distinctive form, design features and materials.
7. Given my findings above, there do not appear to be clear design considerations in this case to permit a departure from Policy DMD24. Whilst the appellant suggests that a condition seeking an alternative scheme would be acceptable, I do not have any such plans before me to consider and such a condition would not accord with the Planning Practice Guidance regarding the use of conditions.
8. As a result, the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area and would thus conflict with Policies COR1 and COR4 of the Dartmoor National Park Authority Core Strategy (2008) (Core Strategy), which require, amongst other things, that development proposals demonstrate a scale and layout appropriate to the site and its surroundings, conserving or enhancing the quality and distinctiveness of the built environment and local landscape character. Conflict would also arise with Policies DMD7 and DMD24 of the DMD, which collectively, amongst other considerations, seek to ensure that extensions will not adversely affect the appearance of the dwelling, its curtilage or immediate surroundings.

Other Matters

9. I have taken into consideration that the proposal would result in the provision of a 'Lifetime Home' which may incorporate more energy efficiency measures than the existing dwelling.
10. I note that the proposal is required in order to provide sufficient room in the dwelling for his family and that the appellant wishes to remain at the dwelling as part of the local community. However, I am mindful that the proposal is not the only means of achieving such an outcome and in any case, these factors do not override the need for planning to operate primarily in the interests of the public benefit. These personal circumstances do not outweigh the identified harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling and wider area.

Conclusion

11. The development would conflict with the development plan and the Framework when considered in the round. There are no material considerations that alone, or in combination, outweigh the identified harm and associated development plan conflict. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

Hollie Nicholls

INSPECTOR