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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 July 2019

**by L Crouch BA(Hons) MSc IHBC**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 13<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/J9497/D/19/3230171**

**3 New London, Princetown PL20 6QU**

- 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 and Mrs Harries against the decision of Dartmoor National Park Authority.
  - The application Ref 0114/19, dated 5 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 14 May 2019.
  - The development proposed is for a two storey side extension to dwelling.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether or not the development would be an acceptable enlargement of the original dwelling, having regard to the effect of the development on the character and appearance of a non-designated heritage asset (HA), its significance and setting.

### Reasons

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached cottage which dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The dwelling forms part of a group of eight cottages. The National Park Authority (NPA) has identified the group as being 'unique' and 'rare', built to specifically house workers of a tin mine. Despite some alterations the historic cottages retain a degree of consistency in their form, materials and appearance.
4. The cottage is not a statutory listed building or situated within a designated conservation area. However, the building has been identified by the NPA as a HA and has clarified that it is on the Historic Environment Register (HER), reflecting its local historic importance.
5. In my view, the cottage's local historic and architectural significance lies in the history of its development as a worker's dwelling, its modest cottage scale, its simplistic and traditional design and detailing, and its setting as part of a planned group.
6. The appeal proposal would extend the cottage to the side with a two storey extension. This extension, when seen from the front elevation, would be wider than the width of the cottage and would result in a dominating impact on the

- character and appearance of the modest dwelling. Whilst the extension's ridge line is set well below that of the cottage's ridge; the degree of roof pitch does not correspond with the existing roof pitch of the cottage, which is steeper in its angle. The extension's roof pitch, when combined with its width and length, would result in an incongruous addition to the cottage and would have a negative impact on the cottage's character and appearance.
7. Furthermore, the proposed extension would also have a harmful unbalancing impact as the largely symmetrical semi-detached pair of cottages are appreciated together, as well as individually.
  8. Subsequently, there would be a harmful impact on the HA's significance as the proposal would erode its modest, traditional scale and water down its value as a semi-detached cottage, which has been designed as part of a planned group.
  9. I have had regard to the well screened location, the manner in which the extension will be stepped back from the front elevation, the lower ridge height, its position 'down slope', and the proposed use of in-keeping materials and windows. However, these aspects do not outweigh the harm that I have found.
  10. It is not disputed that the appeal proposal would considerably exceed the requirement of Policy DMD24 of the Dartmoor National Park Authority Development Management and Delivery Development Plan Document 2013 (DPD), which limits extensions to a 30% increase.
  11. Whilst the appellant indicates that the extra accommodation has to fit in and around an existing awkward layout in order to achieve their desired level of accommodation, this is part of its historic plan form and is indicative of its original proportions.
  12. I note a home office would be beneficial to the appellant however there is no justification as to why this cannot be achieved within the 30%. I note the personal desire for the additional accommodation, however given my findings on the harm to the significance of the HA, I do not consider these other matters alone, or in combination, to warrant design considerations sufficient to justify a greater increase in floor space than the policy in this case.
  13. Consequently, I find that the proposal will have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the HA, its significance and setting and therefore conflicts with Policies COR1, COR3, COR4, COR5, of the Dartmoor National Park Authority Core Strategy Development Plan Document (CS) 2008. It would also conflict with Policies DMD1a, DMD1b, DMD3, DMD7, DMD8 and DMD24 of the DPD. Collectively, these policies seek to ensure well designed sustainable, sympathetic development which is appropriate in scale, form and materials, and which respects the built environment, enhances local character and distinctiveness, conserves and enhances historic buildings, their character, appearance and setting, and reflects the principles set out in the Dartmoor National Park Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2011.

## Conclusions

14. The appellants have identified that the Framework supports sustainable development such as the proposal. That there would be minor economic benefits to the community, although it has not been specifically identified what those benefits would be, and that the proposal has positive support from interested parties, including from the Parish Council.

15. Additionally, I have had regard to the existing living arrangements, including the existing staircase, which I viewed on my site visit, and the NPA's desire for good quality homes which are not cramped or dangerous.
16. I note the existing two storey extensions along New London and the sustainable benefits of home working. However, given the harm that I have found to the character and appearance of the HA, and having regard to the Framework's clear emphasis on good design, these factors do not outweigh this harm and I do not consider the development to be acceptable overall. I recognise that there is no policy relating to home working or 'dangerous' homes however this does not mean that the CS is out of date.
17. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*L Crouch*

INSPECTOR