

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 November 2019

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/X1545/D/19/3237918

White Barn, Blue Mill Lane, Woodham Walter, Essex, CM9 6LS

- 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 Tim Lodge against the decision of Maldon District Council.
 - The application Ref HOUSE/MAL/19/00584, dated 22 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 30 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is a 2 bay cart lodge with side storage and new access
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I use the Council's description of development which is more concise than the application forms; I note the Appellant also uses this on the appeal form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the locality.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a two storey detached house with a single storey element to one side and is in a small cluster of sporadic development in a countryside setting. The scene is an attractive one and even with a public house alongside the local character is predominantly rural and bucolic. The proposal is as described above. The building would have a footprint of about 47 square metres and its pitched roof would have a ridge height of about 4.9 metres. It would lie to the side of the house. Hard surfacing is planned for driveway and manoeuvring space and a new vehicular access would be created to the lane through hedge removal and verge crossing.
 5. The Council has not raised concerns over the principle of an outbuilding, access creation, parking proposals, or on or off-site residential amenity and for the same reasons it gives I would agree with these points. One of the attributes of this locality is a sense of space and care needs to be taken to not actually or apparently over-develop any garden areas. The proposal would be set back behind the main building frontage which would be a positive visual attribute. Building too near side boundaries or effectively across a plot if this was to be
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overly evident and thus cause loss of the sense of spaciousness would be regrettable in the scene. Matching materials to the single storey element on the other side of the principal element is well considered and would be a visually logical and I note the Appellant's explanation on this. However what the scheme fails to do is reflect the modest form of this existing side extension. It is all very well to use the materials but if the ridge height is very appreciably greater than the side building and the eaves height is markedly above the gutter on the principal elevation then the balanced and subordinate effect would be lost. The bulk of this proposal would make it look like over-development. The building would be too tall relative to the main house and for the gap available. Furthermore, whilst symmetry is not necessarily essential, it would not be reflective in scale to the other side extension.

6. The scene would be of cramped and strangely disjointed development. Care needs to be taken here and this is particularly so given the frontage would be more open with a stretch of hedge needing to be removed and the fact that wider views would gain greater clarity given the need to fell a substantial willow tree where hard surfacing is planned.
7. In summary and put simply the proposal is too bulky and would lack suitable subtlety in the scene and subservience to the host property. It would thus impact adversely upon the character and appearance of the area.
8. Policies D1 and H4 of the Maldon District Local Development Plan are relevant. Taken together, and amongst other matters, they call for well designed development which would enhance local character, respect context, be of a suitable scale and complement the existing building. I conclude that the appeal scheme would run contrary to these policies.

Other matters

9. I do understand the wish for covered parking and storage space and I hope that a suitable solution can be found in this regard. I can see that thought has been given to the selection of materials and the appearance of the planned structure albeit I disagree with the suitability of an ancillary building of this bulk in this position. I have carefully considered other examples of outbuildings drawn to my attention but found them to be not directly comparable in terms of design, scale, siting or context and in any event I must assess the appeal scheme on its own merits. I have carefully considered all the points raised by the Appellant but these matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to the main issue identified above.
10. I confirm that policies in the National Planning Policy Framework have been considered; the Council's policies which I cite mirror relevant objectives within the Framework.

Overall conclusion

11. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the locality. Accordingly the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR