
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 December 2019

by R Lankshear BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/J1860/D/19/3237659

Myrtle Cottage, Drake Street, Welland, Worcestershire WR13 6LN

- 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 C Ball against the decision of Malvern Hills District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00523/HP, dated 5 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 19 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is to form two storey extension to rear of existing dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on i) the character and appearance of the host building and its significance as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA) and ii) protected species.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached dwelling finished in white render with black exposed timber frame with a tiled roof. Accommodation is split across two floors including within the roof pitch. The dwelling has previously been extended, with amongst other things the addition of a one and a half storey projection to the rear. This rear extension has been done in a manner that reflects the design, form and materials of the original dwelling and does not appear as a distinctive or separate element of the host property.
4. Although not listed, it is suggested by the Council that owing to its past use as a Post Office, its architectural quality and its presence on historic ordnance survey records, the building has historic and architectural value as a NDHA. As the previous use of the building has already ceased, I do not consider that the proposed extension would diminish its value in this regard. However, although I acknowledge that previous extensions have been added to the property, the pleasing, original form and characteristics of the building are still very evident. In this regard therefore I have no reason to disagree with the assessment that the building has architectural value as an NDHA.
5. The appeal development would introduce a rear two storey projection, of significant depth, finished in timber cladding and render with a mono-pitch zinc standing seam roof. I acknowledge that the ridge height of this roof would be

- commensurate with that of the host dwelling. However, its pitch would not match that of the host property and it would also feature a higher eaves level.
6. Notwithstanding the appellant's assessment of the building's significance, I consider that, due to its significant depth and anomalous roof form, the proposed extension would be significantly at odds with the character and style of the host dwelling and would not appear as a modest or subordinate addition. Although it would project from a previous extension to the original building, it would represent a visually jarring and conspicuous form of development that would fail to reflect or enhance, and would compete with, the distinctive character of the dwelling, in both its original and extended form.
 7. This impact would be exacerbated by the predominantly open characteristic of the surrounding landscape. Whilst I acknowledge the presence of a garage and various other agricultural buildings adjacent to the appeal dwelling, relatively clear views are available across the site. This includes views towards the side and rear of the dwelling including from Drake Street, particularly on the approach from the west, and through gaps in the hedgerow from the public right of way running to the west.
 8. It has been brought to my attention that the local landscape is not designated or recognised as being of particular sensitivity and that the proposal would in part be viewed against a treed, verdant backdrop. Whilst I acknowledge this and that the visual impact would be reasonably localised in its extent, the effect of the scheme would be to diminish unacceptably the character, appearance and integrity of the host building. In its current form the building contributes positively to its surroundings. Although there is variety in built form evident within the vicinity of the site, the awkward juxtaposition between the proposed extension and the host dwelling would diminish its value, and consequently, harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
 9. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the character of the host building and its significance as a NDHA. As such it would fail to accord with the conservation aims of policies SWDP6 and SWDP24 of the South Worcestershire Development Plan 2016 (SWDP). It would also conflict with SWDP21 of the SWDP which seeks, amongst other things, to encourage good design and with SWDP25 of the same plan which seeks to ensure that proposals are appropriate in their relationship to their surroundings and landscape setting. Conflict would also occur with the National Planning Policy Framework including chapters 12 and 16 and guidance contained within the adopted South Worcestershire Design Guide SPD (2018).

Protected species

10. The planning application was not accompanied by an ecological assessment and in the absence of such, a reason for refusal attached to the Council's decision. Circular 06/2005 states that it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before planning permission is granted. This is a material consideration and must be addressed in making the decision.
11. This appeal has been supported by an assessment of the building confirming that there is negligible potential for use of the building as a bat roost. The Council have considered the submitted survey and have confirmed that they are satisfied that the development would not result in an unacceptable harm to

protected species subject to works being undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of the submitted survey. I have no reason to take a different view in this regard and consider subject to the precautionary approach suggested within the survey that this could adequately be dealt with by way of condition.

12. For the reasons outlined above, I conclude that the proposal would accord with the provisions of SWDP22 of the SWDP that seeks amongst other things, to prevent adverse effect on protected species.

Conclusion

13. Although I have identified any adverse effect on protected species could be adequately mitigated by way of condition this does not outweigh the harm including conflict with the development plan in relation to the first main issue in this case. Accordingly, for the reasons outlined above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Robert Lankshear

INSPECTOR