



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 January 2020

by J M Tweddle BSc(Hons) MSc(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/V2723/D/19/3237666

Owls Nest, Leyburn Road, Wensley, Leyburn DL8 4HR

- 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 Miss Jessica Allen against the decision of Richmondshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00327/FULL, dated 29 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 8 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as: 'we would like to extend to the rear of the property to include a small dining room, second bedroom, storage room/study and a bathroom that would enable a bath to be fitted. The property currently has a small shower room, one bedroom and a small open plan living and kitchen space. We have very limited storage and would like to be able to accommodate family members, and longer term the second bedroom and bath would be used for a child/children'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. I have taken the site address from the appeal form as this appears to be a more accurate reflection of the site's location.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. Owls Nest is a modest single storey stone building located in open countryside to the north of the A684 public highway between Wensley and Leyburn. Immediately to its south is a further small stone building of similar scale and design known as Myres Farm Barn. The two former barns sit comfortably within the surrounding landscape adding positively to its intrinsic rural character that is typical of the Yorkshire Dales, yet outside of the National Park area.
5. The Council has previously granted planning permission for the residential conversion and extension of the appeal building with a further extension granted on appeal in 2015. These permissions, now implemented, have sought to ensure the building's original character and appearance were retained and that the consequent effect on its surrounding rural setting was acceptable.
6. The proposal would introduce a large single storey extension to facilitate an additional bedroom, bathroom and dining area. This would be a substantial addition to the property that would appear to almost double the floor area of

the original building. Accordingly, this would result in an overly assertive and disproportionate extension that would harmfully diminish the building's original modest agricultural character. Indeed, its opposing ridge line, running at a right angle to the building, would be at odds with its original simple form and layout and therefore appear as an incongruous addition. Due to its size and positioning, the extension would be visible within the wider landscape and would be seen from the nearby public footpath, the highway to the south and particularly visible in views from the east.

7. The appellant's flexibility over the use of traditional or contemporary materials is noted. However, this would do little to alleviate the harm I have found, which is a consequence of the scale, form and overall massing of the extension compared with that of the original structure. Therefore, whilst reasonably localised in its extent, the effect of the proposal would be to diminish unacceptably the character, appearance and integrity of the host building with resultant harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
8. This would be contrary to Policies CP3, CP8, CP12 and CP13 of the Richmondshire Local Plan (adopted 2014). Together these policies are supportive of the re-use of buildings without substantial alteration or extension and seek to achieve high quality design that protects local character. The proposal would also conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework which promotes high standards of design that is sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

9. The appellant is of the view that the proposal would have a positive impact on the community and be beneficial in supporting rural tourism, yet I have limited evidence to support these claims. They also argue that the proposal contributes to sustainable rural living. I accept that the development would provide additional space for the occupiers, yet these are private benefits that do not override the harm I have identified. Furthermore, there is no evidence to suggest that the property, in its current form, is not contributing to the rural community. It is currently occupied and is likely to provide a relatively affordable form of accommodation which adds to the rural housing mix.
10. I acknowledge the appellant's frustrations with the limitations imposed on the re-use of traditional rural buildings. However, in order to achieve the sustainable re-use of such buildings, their conversion and any subsequent alterations ought to be carried out in a manner that respects their original character and contribution to the surrounding rural landscape. This is a well-established principle in planning and is clearly set out in the aforementioned Local Plan policies. It follows, therefore, that such buildings will inevitably have a limited capacity for change, as demonstrated in this case. Furthermore, the reduction in window sizes to reduce light pollution and the lack of any objections do not justify the harm I have found and does not, therefore, lead me away from my conclusion.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons I have set out, the appeal is dismissed.

Jeff Tweddle

INSPECTOR