



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 July 2020

by Sarah Manchester BSc MSc PhD MEnvSc

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/A2335/D/20/3250581

Sand Villa Cottage, Sandside, Cockerham, Lancaster LA2 0EW

- 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 Nicholls against the decision of Lancaster City Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01591/FUL, dated 19 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 14 February 2020.
 - The development proposed is erection of a first floor rear extension and construction of a balcony to the rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of a first floor rear extension and construction of a balcony to the rear at Sand Villa Cottage, Sandside, Cockerham, Lancaster LA2 0EW, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/01591/FUL, dated 19 December 2019, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 31.1937.05 Rev B – Site and Location Plan; 31.1937.03 Rev A – Proposed Floor Plans; 31.1937.04 rev A – Proposed Elevations.
 - 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in the materials shown on plan no. 31.1937.04 Rev A – Proposed Elevations.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council accepted amended plans during the processing of the application that removed the rear porch extension and recessed the first floor balcony into the rear gable end of the proposal. I have therefore determined the appeal on the basis of the plans that were determined by the Council.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. Sand Villa Cottage is an extended 2 storey stone built detached property with a slate roof. It is adjacent to the A588 Lancaster Road, approximately 3km from

Cockerham. The surrounding area is characteristically a flat open agricultural landscape with scattered rural dwellings and farmsteads in a range of sizes, styles and ages. The appeal property is well separated from nearby properties and it has open countryside to the rear.

5. The proposed 2 storey rear extension would have a dual pitch slate roof with eaves and ridge height to match the host property. The ground floor elevation would be finished in stone, with timber cladding at first floor level. There would be a first floor balcony in the rear elevation and there would be a small stone extension housing a staircase where the rear elevation of the appeal property meets the side elevation of the extension.
6. The proposal would occupy the footprint of the existing single storey extension, which is a long and low stone and breeze block structure with a monopitch corrugated roof. The existing extension does not respect or complement the character, scale or proportions of the host property. In this regard, while the proposal would be considerably more bulky than the existing extension, it would be a high quality design with a coherent style and palette of materials. Consequently, in this respect, and in contrast to the single storey extension, the proposal would make a positive contribution to the dwelling and the area.
7. By virtue of its length and height, the proposal would be substantially large and it would not be subservient to the host property in terms of scale. However, it would not directly affect the principal elevation of the host property or its gable ends. Moreover, by virtue of the width of the original property, the proposal would not overwhelm its 2 storey rear elevation which in any case appears relatively unremarkable. Furthermore, the use of cladding to the first floor elevations rather than stone, and the inset balcony, would break up the visual mass of the building. Therefore, the host property would retain its individual identity and it would not be visually overwhelmed by the proposal.
8. The significant increase in the bulk of built development would be more visible than the existing low extension. However, on the basis of the evidence including what I saw during my visit, I find that the proposal would not be visually obtrusive or discordant. By virtue of its length and height, the proposal would be visible when approaching in either direction along the road. However, the property is screened by tall hedgerows and trees and it is on a relatively fast stretch of road with no footways. Therefore, the limited passing views of the proposal that would be afforded to road users would not be significantly detrimental and it would not appear overly prominent in this location.
9. From more distant views to the rear over open countryside, the proposal would be seen in the context of the host property and it would not therefore appear conspicuous or incongruous. Moreover, the surrounding open countryside is a large-scale landscape characterised by sporadic built development that includes substantial detached dwellings and agricultural buildings. In this context, the proposal would not appear discordant or out of scale.
10. Although timber cladding might not be a traditional construction material for dwellings in this area, the extent of cladding to the first floor elevation would not dominate the building. Moreover, it would be consistent with the appearance of agricultural buildings elsewhere in the area, including some with permission for conversion to dwellings. Consequently, while the cladding would not match the building materials of the host property, it would not result in a significant adverse visual impact.

11. Therefore, the proposal would not result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property or the area. Consequently, it would not conflict with Policy DM35 of A Local Plan for Lancaster District 2011-2031 Development Management DPD Adopted December 2014, which requires among other things that there would be significant detrimental impact in relation to visual amenity. It would not conflict with the design or visual amenity aims of the National Planning Policy Framework in relation to high quality buildings and places and development that adds to the overall quality of the area.

Conditions

12. In the event that the appeal was allowed, the Council has suggested planning conditions. I have assessed these against the tests set out in Paragraph 55 of the Framework.
13. In addition to the standard condition limiting the lifespan of the planning permission, a condition securing materials is necessary to protect the character and appearance of the area. I have also specified the approved plans in the interests of certainty.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would not conflict with the development plan. Therefore, the appeal should be allowed and planning permission should be granted, subject to conditions.

Sarah Manchester

INSPECTOR