The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 September 2020

by Andrew McGlone BSc MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4 September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/B2355/D/20/3254812
4 Lowerfold Cottage, Cowpe Road, Cowpe BB4 7AE

- 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 John Davenport against the decision of Rossendale Borough Council.
- The application Ref 2020/0127, dated 10 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 23 June 2020.
- The development proposed is a detached garage.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a detached garage at 4 Lowerfold Cottage, Cowpe Road, Cowpe BB4 7AE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2020/0127, dated 10 March 2020, 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: LC-09-03-20; LC-13-6-20; and 1:1250 site location plan.

   3) No materials shall be used on the external elevations or roof of the proposed development other than those referred to on the approved plans / supporting documentation.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a traditional two-storey semi-detached cottage situated among a small group of stone-built farm buildings now occupied as dwellings. The properties are within the countryside and nestled part way up a hillside to the south-east of Waterfoot. A small area of hardstanding used for car parking is to the front of the property. Ground levels to the side of the dwelling rise steadily initially before the gradient increases at the rear of the site. The surrounding rural landscape is largely grassed but is occasionally scarred with the lower slopes populated by trees and pockets of residential development.

4. The proposed garage would be sited within the grounds of the host property

and viewed in the context of the group of dwellings. The form of development would not be uncharacteristic given the neighbouring garages. The proposal will reduce the openness of the land to the side of No 4, and result in some of the grassed slope being lost, but the amount of development would be relatively modest, contained within the plot and designed in a manner that would reflect the group of dwellings.

5. Localised changes would be caused as a result of excavating the ground to form the garage. That said, the gabion retaining wall is of a considerable length and the area of hardstanding proposed to the rear is larger than what would reasonably be required to facilitate access to and from the garage. However, the effect on the landscape would not be wide-ranging or perceptible from afar as they would be screened by the host dwelling, by others in the group, or viewed up against a rising landscape. Moreover, the gabion would be likely over time to blend into the landscape.

6. While the Council suggest an alternative siting for the garage, the site edged red would prevent this, or even if a garage were sited closer to the flank elevation of No 4 this would affect the outlook from several windows.

7. I conclude that the proposed development would complement the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would accord with Policies 1, 18, 21, 23 and 24 of the From East to West Making Rossendale the Best Core Strategy Development Plan Document: The Way Forward (2011 – 2026) and paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework. These policies jointly seek, among other things, development to be of the highest standard of design that respects and responds to local context, distinctiveness and character so that the countryside is protected and harmful impacts of development are avoided on Rossendale's natural environment.

Conclusion and conditions

8. I have imposed a plans condition in the interests of certainty. A condition concerning the materials is also necessary in the interests of the character and appearance of the area.

9. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal is allowed.

Andrew McGlone

INSPECTOR