
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 September 2020

by M Philpott BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/C1570/D/20/3254029

Quendon Cottage, Cambridge Road, Quendon CB11 3XJ

- 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 Michaelides against the decision of Uttlesford District Council.
 - The application Ref UTT/20/0227/HHF, dated 23 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 14 April 2020.
 - The development proposed was originally described as 'proposed single storey front extension and replacement garage'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for single storey front extension, demolition of existing detached garage and erection of replacement garage at Quendon Cottage, Cambridge Road, Quendon CB11 3XJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref UTT/20/0227/HHF, dated 23 January 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: M/4440/20-EX-01; M/4440/20-PL-01; M/4440/20-PL-02.
 - 3) Prior to the commencement of construction work above slab level, and notwithstanding the approved plans, details/samples of the external finishes of the materials to be used for the walls, roofs, windows and doors of the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details/samples.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of the development in the banner heading above is taken from the planning application form. However, I consider that the appeal form and decision notice describe the proposal more accurately as 'Proposed single storey front extension. Demolition of existing detached garage and erection of replacement garage'. The formal decision is worded accordingly.
3. An updated ground floor and elevations plan (M/4440/20/PL-01 Revision A) has been submitted with the appeal. It does not alter the development proposed but shows the profile of the existing garage to be demolished. I have thus treated it as illustrative only.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the surrounding area, with due regard to the Rickling and Quendon Conservation Area and the setting of the Church of Quendon, which is a Grade II* Listed Building.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is located outside the settlement limits identified by the Uttlesford Local Plan (LP) and thus is in the countryside for the purposes of planning policy. It comprises a residential property at Quendon Cottage which is accessed from a lane off Cambridge Road. The property includes a 2 storey dwellinghouse and a garage with a metal roof that is set near to the lane. The lane slopes upwards away from Cambridge Road, with the property at a higher land level than the road.
6. The Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA)¹ explains that Quendon is a linear settlement that has changed relatively little over the last century. It identifies that the village features various buildings of architectural and historic interest, several of which are listed. The only listed building that the Council refers to on the decision notice is the Church of Quendon, which is located along the lane. The description from the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest reveals that the church has been graded for its 13th and 16th Century architectural features. The CAA highlights that views of the church can be glimpsed from various points, including the field beside the site and the public right of way that runs through it.
7. The cottage is not identified within the CAA as a building that makes an important architectural or historic contribution to the conservation area and I have not been provided with substantive evidence which otherwise demonstrates that it is of any specific heritage interest. Nonetheless, it is an attractive building that contributes positively to the conservation area.
8. The extension would appear small relative to the size of the cottage, with a roof form that would reflect the existing roof. While it would project more than the cottage's existing single storey elements, its visibility from Cambridge Road would be limited due to the changing land levels and the presence of vegetation along the site boundary. It would be visible from the lane; however, from there its sympathetic roof form would be most appreciable. It would also be visible from the field and the public right of way, but views from there would be drawn towards the parts of the cottage which are closer to the field, such as its double gable, rather than the extension. It would not therefore compete in views or harm the character and appearance of the cottage or the wider area. The Council has not raised specific concerns regarding the extension's effect on the setting of the church and thus I have no reason to either.
9. Intervisibility of the existing garage and the church is limited from the lane, the field and the public right of way as a result of the separation distance and the presence of vegetation and buildings between them. The garage has a metal roof which is prominent and reflects sunlight. Consequently, it appears discordant in the area and detracts from views of the church from the field and the public right of way.

¹ Quendon and Rickling Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals

10. The proposed garage would be only slightly larger than the existing one and thus it would not detract from or appear disproportionate to the cottage. It would be less prominent and more peripheral in views of the church from the lane due to it being set further back. It would also be less prominent in views of the cottage, the church and the surrounding area from the field and the public right of way as a result of its slate roof, which would be less conspicuous and more in keeping with the traditional materials from which the surrounding buildings are constructed. It would not therefore harm the character and appearance of the cottage, the wider area or the setting of the church.
11. The Council considers that the proposal should include sensitive landscaping towards the church. However, I have found that the development would not be harmful and thus additional landscaping is unnecessary.
12. The Council's refusal reasons refer to the effect of the proposal in relation to the 'original dwelling'. It is not clear whether the Council intended to refer to the current condition of the property or as it was originally constructed. However, I have found that the proposal would not be harmful to the cottage in its current form and I have no evidence before me which indicates that it would harm any surviving features or characteristics of the original property.
13. I therefore find that the character and appearance of the cottage and the surrounding area, including the conservation area and the setting of the church, would not be harmed by the proposal. Taking the proposal as a whole, I consider that the conservation area and the setting of the church would be preserved. The proposal accords with Policies ENV1, ENV2, GEN2, H8 and S7 of the LP, which provide design criteria for development and seek to protect the character and appearance of the district, the countryside, conservation areas and the settings of listed buildings. I also find no conflict with paragraphs 127, 170, 196 and 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which seek to protect local character, the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the significance of heritage assets.

Conditions

14. I have considered the conditions put forward by the Council and the appellant. The standard time and plans conditions are necessary. I have also imposed a condition to require the approval of details/samples of the external finishes of the materials to be used for the development, including for the windows and doors, which is necessary in order to protect the character and appearance of the appeal property and the conservation area. The condition is based on the one suggested by the Council; however, I have amended it for precision and clarity and in order to accord with the advice in the Planning Practice Guidance.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons set out above, the appeal is allowed, subject to the conditions identified.

Mark Philpott

INSPECTOR