



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 20 July 2021

by Alison Partington BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th July 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/A0665/D/21/3274865

Dutton Lodge Farm Cottage, Lodge Lane, Dutton, Northwich, WA4 4HW

- 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 David Tetley against the decision of Cheshire West and Chester Council.
 - The application Ref 20/04275/FUL, dated 16 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 11 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as "to add a single storey extension of approx 40m² to one side of the main house and replace a poorly built side porch. The extension will extend the current kitchen, create a boot/utility room, extend the main hall, create a home office space and enable the move of the downstairs WC to a more suitable place."
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The appellant has raised concerns with the Council's handling of the application including the length of time it took to be determined and the lack of any site visit and communication during the determination process. These are matters that would need to be pursued with the Council in the first instance and in determining the application I have only had regard to the planning merits of the case.

Background and Main Issue

3. The site is located within the North Cheshire Green Belt. However, the Council has stated that the proposed extension would not be a disproportionate addition to the dwelling and so, in accordance with paragraph 149 c) of the *National Planning Policy Framework* it would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, nor would it conflict with any local Green Belt policy. I agree.
4. Therefore, the main issue in the appeal is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host property which is a non-designated heritage asset.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a detached dwelling that is a locally listed building. To the south lies a complex of buildings that form Dutton Lodge Farm. A short distance to the east is Dutton Lodge House, a Grade II Listed Building. A small paddock is located between the front of the house and the road and open fields surrounds much of the property. I have not been provided with any

information in respect of the dwelling's status as a non-designated heritage asset. However, the dwelling is an attractive building and I consider its significance lies in part in it being a good example of domestic architecture of its period.

6. Detailed guidance on house extensions is provided in the *House Extensions and Domestic Outbuildings Supplementary Planning Document (adopted January 2021)* (SPD). This highlights that extensions to the front of a house should take care to ensure the character of the existing building is taken into account. To limit their visual impact it advises extensions should not project more than 1.5m from the front of the house and any side extensions should remain separate and should not create a wrap round extension that projects in front of the main front elevation.
7. The proposed extension would project over 3m from the front elevation and would project beyond both the main side elevations of the house. The forward projection would be significantly greater than the guidance given in the SPD. However, I accept that in this case the visibility of the front elevation of the house from the public realm is extremely limited, and that as the house is a standalone property the extension would not disregard any established building line.
8. However, whilst it may be proposed to use reclaimed materials, the design of the extension would not respect the character of the existing property. The slightly staggered front elevation would not be reflected in the design and the pitch of the roof would not respect the relatively steep pitch found on the main dwelling. In addition, the introduction of roof lights in the extension's roof would create a very cluttered pattern to the fenestration on the front elevation.
9. Detailed architectural features such as the soldier course above, and the feature brick work course between, the ground floor windows, and the feature seam between the ground and first floor would be lost. This would make the front elevation out of keeping with the rest of the dwelling.
10. At present the front porch which projects from the front elevation sits under the half dormer window at first floor level. Whilst the proposal would have a projecting porch with a similar design it would no longer align with the half dormer creating a discordant feature to the detriment of the visual amenity of the dwelling.
11. Furthermore, the projection beyond both side elevations would make the proposed extension an unsympathetic addition to the dwelling that would not respect the scale, proportions and character of the host property. Notwithstanding the fact that the proposal would remove the existing small side extension, to the southern side it would create a wraparound extension that would continue to the side contrary to the advice in the SPD.
12. Consequently, I consider the proposed extension would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host property, which is a non-designated heritage asset. It would therefore be contrary to Policies ENV 5 and ENV 6 of the *Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies (adopted January 2015)* and Policies DM 21 and DM 48 of the *Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies (adopted July 2019)* which seek to ensure that developments safeguard or enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets, conserve

interesting features such as architectural detailing and is in keeping with the character and appearance of, and is subordinate to, the original dwelling.

13. In support of the application my attention was drawn to the front extension on the nearby listed building which is visible from the road. I do not know the full details or the circumstances that led to this proposal being considered acceptable but the design of this extension as well as the character of the host property is very different to the appeal building. As such, this does not represent a direct parallel to the appeal scheme. In any case I have determined the appeal on its own merits.
14. I note that the proposal would allow the configuration of space internally to better meet the needs of the occupiers. However, I am not persuaded that this represents the only way a better internal layout could be provided. Nor would this, or the fact that the neighbours have not objected, outweigh the harm the proposal would cause to the character and appearance of the property.
15. For the reasons set out above, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

Alison Partington

INSPECTOR