



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 July 2021

by Benjamin Webb BA(Hons) MA MA MSc PGDip(UD) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 August 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/D/21/3273969

Barton House, North Street, Chiselborough, Yeovil, Somerset TA14 6TH

- 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 and Mrs N Frost against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/02649/HOU, dated 26 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 31 March 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as a single storey and two storey extensions to rear (west elevation) of dwelling plus replacement of existing doors and windows.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single storey and two storey extensions to rear (west elevation) of dwelling plus replacement of existing doors and windows, at Barton House, North Street, Chiselborough, Yeovil, Somerset TA14 6TH, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/02649/HOU, dated 26 August 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) Unless modified in compliance with condition 4, the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1720/5 Rev B; 1720/6; 1720/7.
 - 3) The materials used in the construction of the external surfaces of the two-storey extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing dwelling.
 - 4) Prior to construction of the extensions hereby permitted commencing above slab level, details of features designed to enhance biodiversity, and which shall be built-in to one or other of the extensions, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The features shall then be provided in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on designated heritage assets, including, whether it would preserve the setting of a Grade II* listed building, and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Chiselborough Conservation Area (the Conservation Area).

Reasons

3. The scheme would entail the addition of extensions to the rear of a relatively modern dwelling. The Council has not raised any objection to the single storey conservatory extension. In this regard the dispute relates solely to the 2-storey extension.
4. The 2-storey extension would be added to the rear of the dwelling on the side closest to 17 North Street, which is a Grade II* listed building. At Grade II*, No 17 is a designated heritage asset of the highest significance. Here paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) makes clear that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets; the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.
5. Insofar as it is relevant to this appeal, the special interest and significance of the listed building resides in the possible late C16th date of the street fronting range, and its detailing, and construction in vernacular materials. This is principally appreciated from within the street, and from within a courtyard/garden space to the rear. The latter is partly defined by a large modern extension whose side wall runs close to the boundary with Barton House, and so substantially screens the rear elevation from view.
6. The site is also located within the Conservation Area. Again, insofar as it is relevant to the appeal, the significance of the Conservation Area resides in the historic layout of the village, and the collection and interrelationship of historic buildings and spaces that it contains. Within this context, both Barton House and No 17 form components of a street scene comprising a spaced sequence of dwellings of mixed age, design and scale, generally laid out in a similar position relative to one another and to the street.
7. The proposed extension would roughly square off the footprint of the existing dwelling, balancing an existing wing attached to the opposite side of the rear elevation. The extension would inevitably increase the overall scale and massing of the building. However, the form created would not appear unusual locally, would be both coherent and compact, and matching materials would be used. That being so, the form, scale and details of the extension would not appear in any way visually incongruous, wherever the dwelling was viewed from.
8. As the rear elevation of Barton House stands further back from the street than that of No 17, the proposed extension would not stand or be viewed alongside the main street fronting range of No 17. The overall increase in the scale and mass of Barton House would not otherwise be strongly apparent in views from the street, or therefore detract from appreciation of the significance of the front elevation and end gables of the listed building from this perspective.
9. As noted above, views from within the garden of Barton House towards No 17 are largely screened by the extension attached to the rear of the latter, and by a garage. In this regard, and given my findings above, the proposed extension would have no effect on appreciation of the significance of No. 17.
10. It appears that a more complete view of Barton House is available from within part of the garden of No 17. However, this view again also prominently features No 17's modern extension and the garage at Barton House. The view

holds no significance in itself, and the changes considered above would again have no obvious effect on appreciation of the significance of No 17.

11. From locations at a greater distance towards the west, both dwellings can be viewed together. Here they are seen in the context of other dwellings which line North Street. Given my findings above, the extension would again have no effect on what limited ability exists to appreciate the significance of No 17 from these distant vantage points. For this and the above reasons, I am therefore satisfied that the development would preserve both the setting of the Grade II* listed building, and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
12. I therefore conclude that the development would have an acceptable effect on designated heritage assets. As such, it would comply with Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006 – 2028 (the LP), which seeks to secure development that preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the District, and Policy EQ3 of the LP which both seeks to safeguard or where appropriate enhance the significance, character, setting and local distinctiveness of heritage assets.

Conditions

13. I have imposed standard conditions which set out the time period for commencement of development, and which identify the approved plans for sake of certainty. I have also imposed a condition requiring the use of matching materials in relation to the 2-storey extension. This is in order to help ensure its integration, and satisfactory appearance in relation to its setting. There is no clear need to impose further conditions suggested by the Council which seek to govern finer details. These would be unnecessarily onerous.
14. The Council has requested an additional condition requiring installation of a built-in bat box and a built-in insect house. The condition specifies that the bat box should be installed away from windows on the south or west facing elevations. However, the 2-storey extension will not have a south facing elevation, and the conservatory is of insufficient height. There would otherwise be no place on the west elevation of the 2-storey extension where the box could be installed away from windows. The requirement for a south facing position also applies to the insect house, and in this case could be achieved in relation to the conservatory. However, the requirement to 'maintain' the insect house would be impractical given its construction from clay and reed. I have not therefore imposed the condition. I do however recognise the importance of enhancing biodiversity in the context of new development, and so I have imposed a revised condition, which will enable more practical and realistic measures to be agreed and implemented.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons set out above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Benjamin Webb

INSPECTOR