
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 August 2021

by J J Evans BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24th August 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/D1265/D/21/3275869

1 The Orchard, High Street, Ibberton DT11 0EL

- 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 Piers Closier against the decision of Dorset Council.
 - The application Ref P/HOU/2020/00192, dated 28 October 2020, was refused by notice dated 1 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as a “two storey extension and demolition of existing single storey”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on 20 July 2021. Whilst I have had regard to the revised national policy in my decision, planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, given the particulars of this case I am satisfied that there is no requirement to seek further comment from the parties on the revised Framework, and that in taking such an approach no party or their cases would be prejudiced.

Main Issues

3. The Council’s decision notice refers solely to the effect of the extension on the host dwelling. However, within the Officer Report the proposal is also considered to harm the character and appearance of the area, and this is a matter referred to by the appellant. Having regard to this, the main issues in this appeal are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and upon that of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. 1 The Orchard (No 1) is a semi-detached house positioned upon a gently sloping hillside within the village of Ibberton. The house is part of a small cluster of dwellings that with the village hall form a discrete group at the northern end of the village. Most of the dwellings in this group have generous sized gardens and the presence of these and the set back of the buildings from the public highway gives a loose-knit, spacious appearance to this part of the village.

5. Within this cluster there are two pairs of similarly aged and styled two storey semi-detached houses. Constructed from brick under tiled roofs, these houses have a simple, unadorned form. The similarities of these four houses, both in terms of their style, form and their limited palette of materials gives them a cohesive appearance. As these houses are positioned in an edge of village location on land higher than most of the buildings in the village to the south, they form a distinct group. The elevated position of No 1 makes it visible from a variety of public vantage points, with the generous gardens that separate this house from the neighbouring bungalow contributing to its prominence.
6. Given the position of No 1, the height, size and form of the proposed extension would combine to make the property harmfully prominent. The extension would continue the ridge height of the semi-detached pair of houses, thereby creating a long, monotonous ridge. In addition, the extension would project beyond both the front and rear elevations of the house. This would not only disrupt the cohesive simplicity of the form of the host building, but also that of the group. By being so tall and large, with a deliberate perpendicular relationship to the host building, the extension would have a dominance that would harmfully draw the eye.
7. Moreover, the host building and the other semi-detached houses are constructed from a limited palette of materials. The introduction of horizontal timber or concrete boarding on the first floor would be discordantly different to the simple appearance of the host building. Taken as a whole, the size and height of the extension, when combined with its form and materials, would create an anomalous addition both to the host building and within the surrounding area.
8. Even though there has been no local objection to the proposal, this does not ameliorate the harm of the numerous and significant differences between the extension and its host. I saw at my site visit that other houses within the group have been extended, but in these cases the extensions have a legible subservience of form and appearance that respects the host building and that of the surrounding area, unlike the scheme before me.
9. The extension would, therefore, neither respect the character and appearance of the host building nor that of the area, and this would be contrary to Policies 24 and 28 of the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 (2016). These Policies require amongst other things, that development improves the character and quality of the area in which it is located, and that extensions should be subservient in scale to the existing building, as well as being sympathetic to the site and its surroundings. Whilst the appellant considers Policy 28 to be prescriptive, these Policies reflect objectives of the Framework in seeking to achieve development that is sympathetic to local character. Consequently, the proposal would therefore fail to accord with the development plan when considered as a whole, and there are no considerations before me that indicate the scheme should not be considered in accordance with the development plan.

Other Matters

10. Much of the village is within the Ibberton Conservation Area, with the garden of Hillside Cottage being the boundary. Part of the significance of the Conservation Area is the presence of historic houses set within generous gardens to either side of the principal road through the village. The appeal property and the extension would be seen as part of the discrete cluster of

buildings that is set apart from the historic core of the village by virtue of distance and topography. Having regard to this context, the extension would have a neutral impact upon the setting of the Conservation Area.

11. Finally, the appellant has raised concerns regarding the Council's handling of the application. Such matters have to be pursued by other means separate from the appeal process and are not for me to consider.

Conclusion

12. Thus, for the reasons given above and having considered all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

J J Evans

INSPECTOR