



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 November 2021

by Matthew Jones BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/D/21/3277937

Willow Barn, Pendomer Road, Closworth, Yeovil BA22 9PH

- 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 Matt Whetham against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00955/HOU, dated 18 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 27 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is small single storey extension to existing building with a balcony on top. Technically it is to the front of the house. Dormer to be added to roof to allow access on to Roof Balcony from second floor.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. Willow Barn is an historic barn now converted to a dwelling within an agrarian landscape, accessed from Pendomer Road to the north. When the building was converted, a sizeable perpendicular extension was added at its south east end, with a small porch constructed in the right angle. This markedly changed the scale and plan form of the barn. However, the effect of these enlargements has been well mitigated through design, with the extension and porch earnestly adopting the simple, agricultural typology of the original building.
4. Whilst the extension would be off this newer part of Willow Barn, the building is read as a whole. Legibility of its historic plan would again be reduced, with the extension cutting further across an original elevation. With a dormer breaking the eaves, the use of render, and a flat roof with a balcony enclosed by railings, an overt and incongruous domesticity would be introduced to the once farm building which has thus far been avoided. This would be particularly pronounced given the prominence of the affected elevation from Pendomer Road.
5. I recognise that when an extension is to be added to an historic barn, a contrasting design can sometimes be the most respectful response. However, given the harm I have identified, this would not be achieved in this case.
6. Accordingly, I conclude that the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with the design aims of Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028 (adopted 2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

7. The appellant has referred to Permitted Development Rights for extensions and barn conversions. However, these rights do not apply at Willow Barn. Indeed, I understand that householder Permitted Development Rights were removed when permission was granted in order to protect the clear agricultural heritage of the building. The existence of these rights elsewhere does not therefore serve to justify the harm that would arise at Willow Barn.
8. Whilst I acknowledge the delays experienced by the appellant during the planning process, the procedural conduct of the Council is not relevant to my assessment, which is focused on the planning merits of the proposal. The absence of any objection from third parties and Closworth Parish Council and the absence of harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupants are also neutral factors in the balance.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

9. Consequently, the scheme would conflict with the development plan when read as a whole and there are no other considerations which outweigh the conflict.
10. For the reasons outlined above, and taking all other matters raised into account, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Matthew Jones

INSPECTOR