



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 September 2021

by E Brownless BA (Hons) Solicitor (non-practising)

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/V2635/D/21/3274365

Holley House, Stow Road, Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalen, PE34 3BD

- 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 Dr Lorraine Butler against the decision of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: 20/01403/F, dated 16 September 2020, was refused by notice dated 9 February 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as 'garage block and bedrooms over with link to existing'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on the 20 July 2021. The Framework represents the Government's up to date planning policies and how they should be applied. The Council's reason for refusal refers to paragraphs 127, 130 and 170, which have been re-numbered 130 and 174 in the revised version. The parties have been provided an opportunity to comment on the implications of this for their case.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding countryside.

Reasons

4. The appeal property comprises a substantial sized two-storey dwelling set within a generous plot within the countryside. Policy DM5 of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016)(SADMPP) is permissive of the enlargement of dwellings in countryside locations subject to the development being of a good quality and the character and appearance of the streetscene or area in which the development sits being preserved. It goes on to state that schemes that fail to reflect the scale and character of their area or which would be oppressive or adversely affect the amenity of the area or neighbouring properties will be refused.
5. SADMPP Policy DM15 has similar aims. It seeks to protect and enhance the amenity of the wider environment and requires development to respond sensitively and sympathetically to the local setting. Similarly, Policy CS06 of the King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council Core Strategy (2011)(CS) requires proposals to maintain local character and a high quality environment

- and identifies that the countryside will be protected for its intrinsic character and beauty.
6. The proposed extension would introduce a substantial sized building of two-storeys in height at a short distance from the side elevation of Holley House. A partly glazed single storey link extension would integrate the new building with the existing. It would be constructed in similar materials to the host dwelling and include a number of common features such as flat roof dormer windows and a slightly projecting central element with a hipped roof. Nonetheless, the inclusion of large gables to each side of the extension would be an incongruous and dominant addition to the original dwelling. The existence of gable roof structures over the bay projections at the rear of the host dwelling are noted, however these appear small scale and subservient to the predominant hipped roof structure of the host dwelling. Overall, the roof structure would be visually jarring and an unwelcome addition to the existing building.
 7. Furthermore, its central ridge line would stand at some 9.5 metres, taking the Council's measurements, which have not been disputed by the Appellant. I am advised this height would exceed the ridge of the existing roof structure and when taken together with its considerable width, particularly above ground floor level, the result of the addition would be to roughly double the extent of built form on the site.
 8. Taking into account all of the above factors, and from my observations, the size, scale and design of the extension would result in an arrangement that would be overly dominant in its relationship to the original dwelling and would not therefore be sufficiently subservient to it. As a result, the proposed addition would compete with the original dwelling rather than complement it and I concur with the Council's view that it would be read visually as a separate dwelling rather than as an extension to the original. Furthermore, the proposed gable ended roof form would appear as discordant and isolated features which would not integrate well with or complement the existing form and style.
 9. The appeal site is presently well screened from public views by existing planting. However, the proposed development would be partially visible from the shared private driveway and from some neighbouring dwellings and their gardens that are positioned along the shared access. Moreover, as a two-storey extension of considerable height it would inevitably be partially visible in glimpsed views through and over vegetation from some limited public viewpoints from the highway and footpath network, despite the presence of some evergreen specimens, particularly during the winter months when foliage is much less dense. Whilst the existing vegetation provides a degree of screening, there is no guarantee that it would survive for the lifetime of the proposed development and it therefore cannot be relied upon to provide screening to an otherwise unacceptable development. To this extent, the proposal would represent an unwelcome intrusion within the countryside that would detract from its intrinsic character and beauty.
 10. In my view, the extension would not be seen as a visually subordinate element. Rather, the substantial increase in bulk as a consequence of its overall size and scale together with an unsympathetic design would result in the appeal scheme overwhelming the original property and being visually obtrusive, with a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the dwelling itself, and of the surrounding area. There would be conflict with SADMPP Policies DM5 and

DM15 and CS Policy CS06, the requirements of which are set out above. In addition, the appeal scheme would conflict with the aims of the Framework insofar as it requires development to add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Other Matters

11. My attention has been drawn to other developments including Parsonage Farm House and College Farm. I have had regard to the submitted photographs. However, there is limited evidence before me regarding the particular circumstances of these developments and whether the circumstances are therefore comparable to the appeal scheme. As such, a comparison is of limited relevance in this instance.
12. Furthermore, it is put to me that the overall footprint of the extended dwelling would be comparable to neighbouring dwellings. However, there is little detailed evidence to substantiate this view. Whilst I observed these neighbouring dwellings at the time of my site visit, my views were limited to those from the highway and the shared access, which do not provide a full picture for a comprehensive analysis. Moreover, as converted barn buildings, these are not comparable to the appeal scheme which seeks to add a substantial sized extension. Their simple utilitarian design is not directly analogous to the appeal scheme and therefore a comparison to these dwellings is of limited relevance. I have considered the appeal before me on its individual planning merits.
13. Reference is made to the addition of a lantern style rooflight, mirroring elements of the flat roof and raising the roofline. However, these matters did not form part of the original application and there is limited information before me pertaining to these matters.
14. The constrained heights of the existing bedrooms are acknowledged, and I note the Appellant's desire to extend and improve her property. However, it is rare for personal circumstances to outweigh planning principles.

Conclusion

15. I have found that the proposed development would cause material harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and of the surrounding countryside. The material considerations in this instance are insufficient to outweigh the harm and the conflict with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

E Brownless

INSPECTOR