



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 23 November 2021

by Sarah Manchester BSc MSc PhD MEnvSc

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21st December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Q9495/W/21/3276049

Watermead, Old Hall Road, Troutbeck Bridge, Windermere LA23 1JA

- 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 N Chester against the decision of Lake District National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref 7/2020/5447, dated 24 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 1 December 2020.
 - The development proposed is replacement dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. In May 2021, the Lake District National Park Local Plan 2020-2035 (the LP) was adopted. It is the development plan for the purposes of the appeal and the policies listed in the reasons for refusal have been superseded. The parties have been provided with the opportunity to comment on the adopted LP through the appeal process.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, including the Lake District National Park and the English Lake District World Heritage Site.

Reasons

4. Watermead is a detached dwelling set in generous mature landscaped grounds in an elevated and prominent position. It was constructed in the 1920s by the Pattinson family builders who are notable for their early 20th century villas in the Windermere area. It is attractively proportioned and detailed and it is finished in painted render with a slate roof. Its front elevation comprises a central 2 storey pitch roof gable with studded timber door, flanked by single storey elevations beneath long roof slopes with modest dormers and tall curved chimneys. It has a sympathetic and subservient side extension and a detached garage. Old Hall Road is a private road between Lake Windermere and the A591 that serves a number of widely separated properties of various sizes and styles set in large mature plots in a wider lakeshore and woodland setting.
5. The replacement dwelling would be a substantially large and sprawling 2 storey dwelling. It would be finished in white roughcast render with a slate roof and it would incorporate cladding including local stone, cedar boarding and standing

seam zinc. The tall roof slopes to the frontage would be interrupted by noticeably large box dormer extensions. The 2 storey front gable would be a heavy feature, rendered more prominent by zinc cladding. The front elevation would be disproportionately wide, extensively glazed and conspicuous. The proposal would have various stepped elevations, changes in roof heights and styles and irregular fenestration, chimneys and rooflights.

6. Taking all this into account, the proposal would not have the coherence and understated elegance of the existing dwelling. By virtue of its design and materials, its overly large size and its prominent siting, the proposal would be an overtly contemporary building that would dominate, and it would not be integrated into, its surroundings. It would not be sympathetic to local character and history. It would not be an outstanding or innovative design that would add to the overall quality of the area.
7. Watermead is not a large villa, but it is a country house in its own landscaped grounds. It is a distinctive and characterful property influenced by the local Arts and Crafts movement. It has a charm and architectural merit that it is clearly rooted in the rich cultural tradition of the area. It makes a strong positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness and to the picturesque beauty of the landscape. In contrast, the replacement dwelling would be bulky and discordant. It would not harmonise with the high quality surrounding landscape and it would not reflect the local architectural tradition. The proposal would be detrimental to local distinctiveness and sense of place.
8. The English Lake District World Heritage Site (WHS) is a designated heritage asset internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). The OUV is based on attributes of 3 intertwining and interdependent themes of the landscape including its inspiration for artistic and literary movements and globally influential ideas about landscape. Windermere Valley has components of attributes for all 3 themes of OUV, including the numerous villas on its eastern shore which are an attribute of its rich cultural landscape.
9. Watermead is not listed in the WHS nomination document as an outstanding example of a villa. While this is not a definitive list of villas, nevertheless the property appears to be an example of a villa-type house built for the middle and upper classes in the early 20th century. Moreover, while it is readily visible from Old Hall Road and the surrounding area, it makes a limited contribution to wider public views. Notwithstanding its architectural and landscape merits in the local villa and Arts and Crafts tradition, there is little evidence that Watermead is a component of the attribute of OUV. As the proposal would not be the loss of an attribute of OUV, it would have a neutral effect on the significance of the WHS.
10. Irrespective that it would not harm the WHS, for the reasons set out above I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area including the appeal property and the Lake District National Park. It would conflict with LP Policies 01, 02, 05 and 06. These require, among other things, that development conserves and enhances the extraordinary harmony and beauty of the landscape, that it maintains local character and distinctiveness and sense of place. It would conflict with the design, visual amenity and landscape protection aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), including that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks. However, as I have

not found harm to the WHS, the proposal would not conflict with the aims of LP Policy 07 or the heritage protection aims of the Framework.

Other Matters

11. The appellant has a large extended family and he wants a larger property in order that his children and their respective families can visit simultaneously. In this regard, while Watermead may have been described as a bungalow when it was constructed, it provides living accommodation over 2 floors including several bedrooms. It is suitable for occupation by a family and there is little evidence that it fails to provide a reasonable standard of living accommodation. The appellant's personal preference does not weigh in favour of the proposal.
12. My attention has been drawn to planning permission ref 7/2018/5771 for demolition of Innisfree and the construction of a replacement dwelling on Old Hall Road. Innisfree was a painted render and slate dwelling by Pattinson builders in the 1920s, but it was dissimilar to Watermead in terms of its character and appearance. Moreover, I understand that the design of that replacement dwelling was visibly influenced by the Arts and Crafts style. In the absence of full details, there is little compelling evidence that scheme is directly comparable to the appeal proposal. Neither it nor other large modern dwellings in the area provide a visual context or a justification for the proposal.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no considerations that would outweigh that conflict.
14. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

Sarah Manchester

INSPECTOR