



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 January 2022

by Jonathan Edwards BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 January 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/D0840/D/21/3283280

Wayside, Pill Lane, Feock, Cornwall TR3 6SE

- 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 Mark and Jo Hardy and Ledger against the decision of Cornwall Council.
 - The application Ref PA21/03484, dated 30 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 12 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is to demolish 70's 2 storey extension and uPVC conservatory. Build new 2 storey contemporary extension and alter and refurbish existing house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the proposal's effect on the character and appearance of (i) the host building as a non-designated heritage asset, and (ii) the area in general including whether it would conserve or enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the AONB).

Reasons

Effect on the host building

3. The appeal property is set on a steep slope on one side of Pill Creek. As a consequence of the topography, only the upper storey and roof of the dwelling is visible from Pill Lane. However, its main fenestrated elevation faces towards the creek and it is seen from public footpaths, the road and private properties on the opposite bank. Despite the partial screening effects of trees, the proposed development would be a noticeable feature from these vantage points, particularly during times of leaf-fall.
4. Both of the main parties recognise Wayside as a non-designated heritage asset. Despite later extensions and a conservatory to the creek side elevation, the form and style of the original Victorian stone dwelling can still be readily appreciated. As such, it is of local historic interest.
5. The removal of the later additions would return the property to its original form and so would cause no harm to its appearance or heritage significance. However, the proposed extensions would be at odds with the configuration of the house as built as they would significantly increase its width and would include a protrusion in front of the elevation to the creek. Moreover, the timber clad external walls of the 2 storey side extension would clash with the painted

stone of the host building. Also, the proposed inset balcony, external staircase, large areas of glazing at ground floor level and a roof with a side gable would not reflect the Victorian style of Wayside.

6. The appellants suggest it is well established practice to contrast subservient extensions to traditional buildings. However, while it would be slightly lower than the main part of the house and slightly set back, the proposed side extension would be significantly larger than the existing side additions. Also, it would be seen directly adjacent to the stone house from the creek and the opposite bank. From these vantage points, the sharp contrast in appearance would impair the attractiveness of Wayside and would diminish its historic interest by drawing attention away from the original house.
7. The scheme would not improve the balance of the pair of semi-detached houses as it would be markedly different in style and form to the additions to the attached dwelling. Properties in the vicinity range in age and style but this lack of uniformity fails to justify an extension that does not reflect the design of the host building. Given the particular nature and qualities of the appeal property, no other development in the locality justifies the proposal's lack of assimilation with the main house.
8. For these reasons, I conclude the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host property as well as its significance as a non-designated heritage asset. In these regards, it would not accord with policy 24 of the Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010 to 2030 (LP) and policy HE1 of the Feock Neighbourhood Development Plan made 2018 (NDP). Amongst other things, these policies seek to safeguard the historic environment.

Effect on the character and appearance of the area

9. Pill Creek and its vegetated banks provide an attractive landscape. As well as Wayside there are other properties on both sides of the creek. However, to a degree these are screened by trees and the slope of the land and so the area retains a significant natural feel and scenic beauty.
10. From the opposite bank and the creek itself, the appeal property and the attached house stand out as prominent buildings in an elevated position, albeit seen in the context of other nearby houses. As a sizeable and incongruous addition, the side extension would draw attention and so detract from the picturesque qualities of the area. The visual impact would be limited as the proposal would involve additions to an existing building. Nevertheless, it would undermine the attractive setting to the creek.
11. As such, I conclude the proposal would cause detriment to the character and appearance of the area and so it would not conserve or enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB. In these regards, it would not accord with LP policy 23 and NDP policies LS2 and D1. Amongst other things, these aim to ensure development respects local character and to conserve the special qualities of the AONB. Reference is made in the refusal reasons to NDP policy BIO1 although this contains no provisions relevant to this issue.

Other Matters

12. The proposal would provide extra living accommodation and improve accessibility around the building, particularly to first floor level. Also it would allow an enhancement in the thermal efficiency of the dwelling. However, I saw

Wayside is currently habitable and, in any event, there is no evidence to suggest such improvements can only be achieved through the appeal scheme. As such, these benefits attract limited weight.

13. The proposal would be a sufficient distance from Creekvean and its entrance gates and walls to avoid affecting the setting or significance of these listed buildings. The site lies in the zone of influence for the Fal and Helford Special Area of Conservation. However, there is no need for me to carry out an appropriate assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as the scheme is unacceptable for other reasons. If I had found the proposal to be acceptable in these regards, such a finding would not have affected my overall conclusion.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons set out in respect of the main issues, the proposal would not accord with the development plan policies when read as a whole. The benefits of the scheme and other factors are of insufficient weight to justify granting planning permission contrary to the development plan. Therefore, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

Jonathan Edwards

INSPECTOR