

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 July 2022

by N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/D/22/3295003
Shayes Farm, Pexhill Road, Gawsworth, SK11 9PZ

- 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 Alan Vickery against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
 - The application Ref 21/3539M, dated 29 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 7 January 2022.
 - The development proposed is a double storey rear extension and boundary treatment.
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Costs

1. An application for costs was made by Mr Alan Vickery against Cheshire East Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Decision

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

3. A previous application for an extension¹ was refused in 2020. The reason for the refusal was that the proposal would result in disproportionate additions above the original size of the house.
4. The appellant provides information showing that there was an error made in the uploading of documents onto the Council's website. The Council accepts this and confirms that the documents were not shown on the Council's website until after the application was determined. This and related matters are considered in the costs application decision referred to above.

Main Issue

5. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. The appeal property is a brick-built two storey detached dwelling with a small single storey extension to the rear located in the countryside. There are outbuildings some distance away from the host dwelling and the whole is set within grounds that originally comprised a small-holding.

¹ Reference: Application Number 20/1167M.

7. The surrounding area is notably rural. The appeal property is surrounded by expansive fields to the north, south, east and west. Pexhill Road in this location comprises an unlit country road without pavements.
8. There are grass verges, hedgerows and occasional trees alongside Pexhill Road and plentiful views to the open countryside beyond. The appeal property, with its distinctive, steeply-pitched slate roof and white rendering is widely visible from Pexhill Road to the front, as well as from the rear, where fields fall away and then rise again towards settlements in the distance.
9. The dwelling appears as a distinctive, period road-side country cottage, the modest overall dimensions of which do not detract from its green, open and spacious surroundings.
10. By way of contrast, the proposed double storey extension would extend the dwelling's footprint and would add significant volume at second floor level. The proposed new roof would not be set down but would reach the same height as the existing roof. The overall scale of the proposal is such that it would appear to almost double the size of the original property and in so doing, it would subsume its modest and distinctive characteristics.
11. As a result of the above, the proposal would not appear subservient to the host property but would, I find, rather overwhelm and dominate it.
12. The harm arising from the above would be exacerbated as a result of the extended dwelling drawing attention to itself as a large and prominent built feature, widely visible in its surroundings. The proposed development would fail to nestle into its rural surroundings and would, I find, appear as a large and visually intrusive house. I find that this would detract from the area's green, open and spacious attributes.
13. Whilst I note the intent to remove outbuildings as part of the proposal, these comprise modest ancillary buildings typically found close to dwellings in the countryside and neither their demolition nor the fact that there used to be other outbuildings on the appeal site would mitigate, in any significant way, the harm identified above.
14. Taking the above into account, I find that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area, contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework; to Local Plan Strategy² Policies PG6, SE1 and SD2; and to Saved Local Plan³ Policy DC2, which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.

Other Matters

15. The appellant considers that the land around the appeal property is likely to be developed for large scale housing estates within the next 10 years as the appeal site is located within a large area of safeguarded land. The appellant considers this to be a material consideration. In this regard, the appellant also states that safeguarded land should be treated as open countryside.

² Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (2017).

³ Macclesfield Borough Local Plan (2004).

16.I note that there is nothing before me to lead me to find that the harm identified above is mitigated to any significant degree because the appeal site falls within safeguarded land.

17.The appellant considers that the Council should have taken a different approach to measuring the increase in floorspace resulting from the proposal, taking into account the proposed demolition of outbuildings.

18.I considered the demolition and previous presence of outbuildings in reaching my decision below.

Conclusion

19.For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR