



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 20 September 2022

by A Tucker BA (Hons) IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 September 2022

Appeal A Ref: APP/X0360/W/22/3296759

Ducks Nest Farm, Eversley Road, Wokingham, Arborfield, RG2 9PJ

- 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 & Mrs Seal against the decision of Wokingham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 220330, dated 4 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 16 March 2022.
 - The development proposed is erection of single storey orangery extension, following the demolition of existing rear conservatory.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/X0360/Y/22/3296763

Ducks Nest Farm Eversley Road, Wokingham, Arborfield, RG2 9PJ

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Seal against the decision of Wokingham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 220331, dated 4 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 16 March 2022.
 - The works proposed are the erection of single storey orangery extension, following the demolition of existing rear conservatory.
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Decision – Appeal A

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Decision – Appeal B

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. The appeals relate to the same proposal under different legislation. Appeal A is made in respect of the planning application and Appeal B in respect of the listed building consent. I have considered each appeal on its own merits.

Main Issue

4. The main issue for both appeals is the effect of the proposal upon the significance of the grade II listed building known as Ducks Nest Farmhouse.

Reasons

5. Section 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (LBCA) requires the decision maker to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

6. The list description suggests that the building dates from the 18th century. Although a sizeable building, it has an unassuming and rather modest scale derived from its linear form and simple detailing. Architectural embellishment is limited to a flush brick string course at first floor level. The building's linear form, its prominent hipped clay tile clad roof, and its simple overall appearance are primary contributors to its special interest.
7. An existing modern conservatory is positioned roughly at the centre of the building's south elevation. This extension has a broad footprint and faces out over the garden with a complex multi-sided south face. It is dominant, owing to its position and form, and accordingly already harms the special interest of the building.
8. The proposal would see this replaced with a larger extension. It would be positioned to the side, and in this respect would be slightly less dominant than the existing conservatory. However, it would have quite a different form and would be noticeably larger than the extension that it would replace.
9. The existing conservatory draws away from the south elevation with a central ridge and pitched roof, and in this respect appears as a simple perpendicular extension to the main range. In contrast, the width of the proposed extension in combination with its depth would result in a bulky addition that would have a poor relationship with the main building. It would neither sit comfortably alongside the existing south elevation nor extend out in a conventional perpendicular fashion. Its inappropriate form would be exacerbated by the appearance of its roof, which would be entirely at odds with the vernacular form of the existing building.
10. It is suggested that the proposed extension would be visually light weight. However, the solid and inelegant appearance of the proposed roof, in combination with solid side sections of wall and the overall bulky form of the proposal would not result in a lightweight addition to the existing building.
11. For these reasons I find that the bulk and form of the proposed extension would cause greater harm to the special interest of the building than the existing conservatory.
12. I agree that the broader setting of the building has been significantly changed by the development of the adjacent industrial buildings. However, the form of the building is readily appreciated from its large gardens, and although the adjacent buildings can be seen from these areas, they have not eroded the special interest of the building to the extent that the proposed extension would not be harmful.
13. I therefore find that the proposal would harm the special interest of the listed building. In terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) the harm would be less than substantial. Paragraph 202 of the Framework establishes that any harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
14. I have no doubt that the proposed extension would provide its users with a pleasant room that would have better light levels than the existing rooms. Altering a building in a manner that improves the way it functions can be considered a public benefit on the basis that it might better secure the building's future; however, in this case it is clear that the extension would

significantly reduce the level of natural light reaching the Kitchen, taking into account its solid roof and lengths of solid wall to either side. As such this is a perceived benefit to which I attach little weight.

15. It is suggested that the proposal would deliver improved security by building over a vulnerable set of French doors. From my observations on site, I could see that the existing doors are of no historic value. Their repair or replacement with something more secure should be fairly easy to achieve and is not a matter that is dependent on the proposed extension. Accordingly, I also give this matter little weight.
16. The proposal would cause harm to the special interest of the building. Paragraph 199 of the Framework establishes that great weight should be given to the conservation of a heritage asset. The public benefits before me are limited and are not sufficient to outweigh the significant level of harm identified.
17. In summary, the proposal would fail to meet the requirements of the LBCA as it would harm the special interest of the building. It would be contrary to Policy CP3 of the Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2010 and Policy TB24 of the Wokingham Borough Development Plan Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014, which together seek to ensure that development proposals are designed to a high quality and conserve heritage assets.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons above, both appeals should be dismissed.

A Tucker

INSPECTOR