



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 November 2022

by J White BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 December 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/D1265/D/22/3305615

Turnpike Cottage, West Road, Bridport, Dorset DT6 6AG

- 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 Rory Brown against the decision of Dorset Council.
 - The application Ref P/HOU/2022/00749, dated 4 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 June 2022.
 - The development proposed was originally described as demolition of attached lean-to extension and summer house and the construction of a two-storey side extension, including raised decking area and external steps.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The description of development, as stated on the application form, is set out in the banner heading above. The proposal was amended during the application to remove the raised decking and external steps. The Council dealt with the development on this basis and, accordingly, so have I.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area including the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Reasons

4. Turnpike Cottage is a small detached two storey one-bedroom dwelling abutting the A35 and adjacent to its junction with Eype Down Road to the east of Chideock. It lies within the Dorset AONB and outside a defined settlement boundary. The appeal property sits with a small cluster of buildings alongside the A35.
5. Given the location within the AONB, consistent with Paragraph 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of the area. The AONB is valued for its special qualities, which include its undeveloped rural character, exceptional undeveloped coastline, tranquillity and dark night skies.
6. Turnpike Cottage is constructed of stone under a dual pitched roof punctuated with a brick chimney stack at its southwest end. Nearby dwellings and buildings vary in appearance and size. The appeal site backs on to farmland with the

land sloping up Eype Down to the southeast. Generally open views are achieved from within the garden to the southwest over farmland and towards the coast.

7. Policy HOUS6 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (the LP) requires, amongst other things, extensions to be subordinate in scale and proportions to the original dwelling and not harm the character of the locality or its landscape setting.
8. Although the proposed two storey side extension would be set back from the front elevation of the house, due to the combination of its height, depth, and length it would be a large and dominant addition. The bulk and sheer length of the outward projection would be excessive, and the extension would be over-dominant to the side of the house, such that it would not appear to be subordinate in scale. Furthermore, because of the open views to the southwest the proposal would impact upon the appearance of the locality. The proposed windows at first floor level cutting through the eaves would introduce features not already present on the building. The whole effect is a scheme which would lack a sense of subtleness and it would overpower the existing dwelling causing harm to its character and appearance, with consequent harm to the surrounding area.
9. The LP includes policies ENV1, ENV10, ENV12 and HOUS6. Taken together, and amongst other matters, they seek to ensure that development is of good design and contributes positively to the maintenance and enhancement of local identity and distinctiveness of the AONB. Given the nature of the scheme and this location I conclude that the appeal proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area including the Dorset AONB. Accordingly, the proposal would run contrary to these policies.
10. The development would also be at odds with the provisions of the Framework to require good design as a key aspect of sustainable development, and to conserve the landscape and scenic beauty of the area.
11. The Council has referred to Paragraph 127 of the Framework within its reason for refusal. This paragraph refers to plan making and policies rather than planning decisions. Although I have considered the provisions of the Framework in my decision, the weight I have attributed to Paragraph 127 is very limited.

Other Matters

12. I recognise the appellant's wish to extend the existing property to meet his needs, whilst meeting the challenge of the site constraints, and enable him to continue living in the local community. Nonetheless, from all that I have seen I am not convinced that this would be an acceptable design solution, and these are personal circumstances which can change over time and the development would remain long after such circumstances have ceased to be relevant. Accordingly, I give this limited weight.
13. I also acknowledge that the existing dwelling has a limited floor space, and that the proposal would replace a lean-to structure attached to the end of the host dwelling and a summer house in its garden. However, the existing structures are rather typical domestic buildings that do not detract from the dwelling. In addition, although the dwelling could benefit from extension, it is a habitable

dwelling that contributes to the local stock of housing and, as I have set out above, the proposed extension in relation to the host dwelling is unacceptable.

14. I have had regard to the appellant's points regarding the percentage increase for extensions associated with Policy HOUS6 of the LP. However, I have found the extension would not be subordinate and it would conflict directly with the policy.
15. Other planning application cases, where similar considerations have been part of a decision have been brought to my attention. The full details of the cases are not before me, however, from the evidence available and observations made during my site visit, the extensions relating to 1 and 2 Sunny Bank, whilst to side elevations, are of different proportions relative to the host dwelling. In any case, the circumstances in each proposal are likely to be different and I have considered this appeal proposal on its own merits and concluded that it would cause harm for the reasons set out above. Therefore, these are matters to which I attach limited weight.

Conclusion

16. The proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations, including the provisions of the Framework, which outweigh this finding. Therefore, for the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J White

INSPECTOR