



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 February 2023

by A J Sutton BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/C1760/D/22/3292350

Manor Farm Cottage, Vernham Street, Andover SP11 0EN

- 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 and Mrs David Silk against the decision of Test Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/02937/FULLN, dated 7 October 2021, was refused by notice dated 2 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is 3 bay timber framed Carport.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character or appearance of the area, including the setting of Manor Farm Cottage which is a listed building.

Reasons

3. The appeal property comprises an attractive detached cottage in a large plot with a rural setting. The cottage is Grade II listed and is understood to be, at one time, farm labourers' cottages dating back to the late 18th Century. The property is now a single dwelling and has a 20th Century extension to the rear. The Heritage Statement supporting the appeal sets out further changes to the property and its wider setting, including the extended domestic curtilage and the former common at the front of the property. However, despite these changes, the dwelling, with its thatched roof and flint and brick construction, retains its historic character and charm.
4. The low picket fence at the front of the property allows views of the front elevation of the dwelling. The front of the dwelling is also flanked by mature hedges which frame the historic interest of the listed building, and this interest is appreciated from the surrounding rural lanes. Also, the sizeable plot of the property is largely undeveloped at the side of the dwelling, and the combination of all these features, along with the surrounding countryside provides the attractive setting of this designated heritage asset.
5. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that when considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, special regard shall be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Paragraph 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework),

sets out matters which should be taken into account including sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

6. The proposed carport would be set apart from the dwelling and would be of a lower height to the dwelling. However, it would be located at the front boundary of the property and a significant section of the proposed large structure would be apparent above the hedge at this boundary. Even if the hedge was higher at this front boundary, it would unlikely screen the expansive cat-slide roof plane of the carport. Moreover, by substantially filling the existing garden space at the side of the dwelling, the new carport would significantly block existing views of the side of the listed building, and the historic interest which is currently visible above the hedge when approaching the property from the east along the sloping lane.
7. The design of the carport and construction materials proposed would be generally reflective of outbuildings in the surrounding area. The appellants also assert the structure would not be disproportionate for the size of the dwelling and plot, and that reflective of Historic England's guidance on assessing the importance of settings, settings of heritage assets change. However, the proposal would result in a solid mass which would significantly encroach into the relatively undeveloped setting of the listed building. At this location the carport would visually compete with the dwelling and would diminish how the listed asset's historic interest is currently appreciated.
8. In reaching this find I have had regard for the images submitted by the appellants. When I visited the site the front hedge, although high, was clipped and well maintained, and this allowed views of the historic roof form and chimney stack when approaching the property, from the east, along the lane. Even if the ground level of the site was levelled in the plot and the hedge was allowed to grow higher, the upper section of the sizeable carport would significantly interrupt the historic interest currently visible at the east side of the property. Also, a higher hedge would not screen the upper section of the carport that would significantly disrupt views of the dwelling at the front of the property, particularly when approaching from the south and viewing the listed building across the former common.
9. The appeal property has been altered to a large domestic dwelling but as outlined, the historic significance of the dwelling remains evident. Moreover, the existing modern additions to the built form at the property are largely confined to the rear of the listed building. This would not be the case for the proposed development as identified above. I have found that the development would fail to preserve the setting of the listed building, and the evidence before me does not demonstrate that this harmful proposal is the only means of addressing the needs of the appellants in this sizeable plot with regards to a covered parking area.
10. My attention has been drawn to surrounding outbuildings including barns and stables. However, these structures are not within the appeal plot and are separated from the listed building by lanes. Those existing buildings, as such, have a distinctly different context to the proposal before me and have not altered my findings in this case for this reason.

11. The Framework requires when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
12. The harmful impacts resulting from the proposal would fail to preserve the setting of the designated asset. This effect would be limited and localised, and the harm caused to the significance of the setting as a whole would be less than substantial. In accordance with Paragraph 202 of the Framework, this harm needs to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
13. The proposal would principally benefit the occupants of the dwelling. Therefore, the benefits identified in this case would not outweigh the harm identified to the setting of the listed building. Consequently, the harm to the designated heritage asset would not have a clear and convincing justification, as required by Paragraph 200 of the Framework.
14. In light of the above, I find that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character or appearance of the area, including the setting of Manor Farm Cottage which is a listed building. In this regard it would conflict with Policy E9 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan. The Policy states, amongst other matters, that development affecting a heritage asset will be permitted provided that it would make a positive contribution to sustaining the significance of the heritage asset, taking account of its character, appearance and setting.
15. It would also be inconsistent with the Framework in respect of conserving the historic environment.

Other Matters

16. I note this is a revised scheme, which seeks to address concerns raised by the Council previously. The scope of this appeal is limited to the proposal before me, and I have found that this proposal would result in harm and would fail to preserve the setting of a listed building. The Landscape officer did not raise any concerns in respect to landscape impact. However, the Council was not obligated by these comments. In any event, similar to the Council, I have identified harm in respect of the heritage asset for the reasons set out above. This matter has not altered my findings for this reason.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons stated above and having regard to the development plan, and material considerations, including the Framework, the appeal is dismissed.

A J Sutton

INSPECTOR