



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 March 2023

by J Evans BA(Hons) AssocRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/W3330/D/22/3311963

Dene Cottage, Stoke Road, Meare Green, Stoke St Gregory, Somerset TA3 6HZ

- 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 Mrs Michelle Seelhoff against the decision of Somerset West and Taunton Council.
 - The application Ref 36/22/0016, dated 2 August 2022, was refused by notice dated 30 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as the Erection of a two storey and single storey extension to the rear (north-east) elevation and the installation of solar panels to the front (south-west) roof
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I have reworded the description of the development as set out above, as I consider this better describes the proposals before me as set out on the submitted plans.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effects of the development on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the wider area.

Reasons

4. Dene Cottage is an attractive vernacular building which has been extended in the past to the rear with an unsympathetic two storey addition, which is visible from the adjacent highway and from the cessation of a public right of way as it meets the highway opposite the appeal site to the north-east.
5. The current rear extension is out of character in visual and character terms and unduly draws the eye when passing. It is also understood from the information before me, that the extension is poorly insulated, has a number of damp and odour issues and does not function well for modern day living.
6. The two storey component of the appeal proposal would be larger than the existing extension, it would be slightly higher and would lead approximately 1 metre deeper into the rear garden. The appeal proposal would also provide for a single storey wrap around addition to the two storey form, which would have

a pitched roof. The plans also indicate that three solar panels would be installed on the front south-west facing roof slope.

7. Following my observations from my site visit, I have no objections to the solar panels or the single storey element of the proposals as I consider these would represent coherent additions to the main dwelling. However, it is the overall massing of the two storey component of the appeal proposals, that would lack subservience and would ultimately represent an overly dominant addition.
8. Whilst there are clear benefits in replacing the existing poor quality extension, it is the increase in the overall form and scale of the two storey component of the rear addition from the existing, that would further detract from and overwhelm the character and appearance of the host dwelling.
9. I do not share the concerns raised by the Council regarding the proposed external materials, to my mind, the use of more recessive finishes, to the render that currently exists, the details for which could be controlled via condition, would be a positive.
10. I also recognise the benefits that would arise from the proposals in terms of improving the living conditions of the appellant and her family, alongside improving the thermal efficiency of the existing dwelling and use of sustainable materials in the construction, these are benefits that weigh in favour of the proposals.
11. However, these benefits do not outweigh the concerns I have set out, it is the mass of the two storey extension that would overwhelm the main dwelling, and it would appear visually jarring and out of place as a result.
12. Consequently, the proposal would conflict with Policy D5 of the Taunton Deane Adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Plan 2016 and Policy DM1 d. of the Taunton Deane Borough Council Adopted Core Strategy 2011-2028, which amongst other matters, require extensions to not unacceptably harm the appearance, form and character of the host dwelling, and are subservient to it in scale and design. The proposal would also conflict with Policy CP8 of the Taunton Deane Borough Council Adopted Core Strategy 2011-2028 which requires development to conserve and enhance the historic environment unless other material factors are sufficient to override its importance.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Evans

INSPECTOR