



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 April 2023

by Lewis Condé Msc, Bsc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 April 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/D0840/W/22/3302747

Roosters Roost, Higher Tregiffian, St Buryan, Penzance, Cornwall TR19 6JB

- 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 Paul Dixon against the decision of Cornwall Council.
 - The application Ref PA22/02930, dated 23 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 19 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Resubmission of Planning Application PA21/07530 for construction of rear balcony'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building (a non-designated heritage asset) and the surrounding area, including the Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Reasons

3. The appeal concerns a former agricultural building that has previously been converted to residential use. It is located amongst a group of former farm buildings at Higher Tregiffian Farm, which are set in the open countryside and within the Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). I understand the appeal building, alongside other former agricultural buildings at Higher Tregiffian, are now used as holiday lets.
4. The Council has identified the appeal building as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA), which has not been challenged by the appellant. From my observations on site, I agree that the building is a NDHA, with its significance deriving from a combination of its age, the architectural character of the original structure and its likely historic association with Higher Tregiffian Farm.
5. Alterations have taken place in the past to allow the appeal building's conversion to residential use. Most notably through the addition of a single storey lean-to extension to its side, the addition of a garden room to its front elevation, as well as the various insertion of fenestration. Despite these alterations the appeal building largely retains a traditional appearance, with the agricultural origins of the building and the site remaining apparent. The appeal building therefore still provides a good quality representation of the local historic style of agricultural buildings. Furthermore, due to the site's slightly elevated position within the surrounding countryside, the site's agricultural origins can be appreciated as part of the wider landscape setting.

6. The proposed balcony would be located to the rear elevation of the building. Notably, the rear elevation appears to have been subject to only modest alterations, primarily the insertion of fenestration including first floor doors. As such, this elevation retains much of its simplicity and original character. The proposed balcony would project approximately 2m beyond and across a significant proportion of the elevation. Despite the proposal being a lightweight wooden structure with the need for only limited stanchions, its projection, scale, and design would not be a sympathetic addition. Instead, it would adversely affect the legibility of the building as a former agricultural unit.
7. Due to its siting the proposed balcony would not be readily visible from the nearby public footpath that runs alongside Higher Tregiffian. Nevertheless, the rear of the appeal site has a largely open aspect across adjacent fields, whilst the building occupies an elevated position. Clear views of the rear elevation are therefore available from various locations along the B3306. I recognise that such views would be fairly distant, and generally transient in nature, while the building would also be seen as part of a collection of former agricultural buildings. However, it remains that the appeal proposal would be distinguishable from public vantage points whilst activity on the proposed balcony would likely result in greater prominence.
8. In accordance with paragraph 203 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), I have taken into account the effect of the development on the significance of the non-designated heritage asset. I find that the proposed balcony would be detrimental to the architectural character of the building and hence its significance.
9. I recognise that the proposal could result in benefits to the local economy relating to the construction process and through making the appeal site more attractive to tourists. However, given the scale of the development proposal, such benefits are deemed to be limited and do not overcome the above concerns.
10. Overall, I find that the proposed development would erode the character and appearance of the building, a non-designated heritage asset. This would be to the detriment of the building but also the wider character and appearance of the area. It would therefore also fail to preserve or enhance the natural beauty of the AONB. As such, the proposal conflicts with Policies 2, 12, 23 and 24 of the Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010 – 2030 (adopted 2016). Together these policies, amongst other matters, require development to be of an appropriate design quality that respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area, including its local distinctiveness, historic environment, and the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB. The proposal would also not conform with the aims of the Cornwall Design Guide 2021 or the Cornwall AONB Management Plan 2022 – 2027.
11. There would also be conflict with the Framework where it seeks to achieve development that is well designed and sympathetic to local character and the historic environment, as well as promoting development that conserves and enhances the landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, the appeal scheme would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations worthy of sufficient weight that would indicate a decision other than in accordance with it. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Lewis Condé

INSPECTOR