

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 April 2023

by N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11th May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/E9505/D/22/3309270

Bridge Farm, Main Road A1064, Arcle Bridge, Fleggburgh, NR13 3AT

- 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 Hobbs against the decision of the Broads Authority.
 - The application Ref BA/2022/0112/HOUSEH, dated 17 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 28 July 2022.
 - The development proposed is retrospective planning application for the erection of a dormer window and external balcony and associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The name of the appellants is taken from the decision notice and appeal form.
3. The development proposed has been partly completed and is referred to as "the development" below.
4. The appellants point out that the Council's decision notice incorrectly refers to an outbuilding, whereas it should refer to an extension. In this regard, I note that the development effectively extends a pre-existing extension to the host dwelling.

Main Issue

5. The main issue in this case is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. The appeal property comprises a detached dwelling that has been extended considerably over time. The dwelling is located in an isolated position, at the end of a long driveway and partly surrounded by fields.
 7. The River Bure flows close to the west of the property and the development the subject of this appeal faces directly towards the river. Public rights of way run alongside both sides of the river, including a public right of way directly in between the development and river.
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8. The appeal property is located within the Norfolk Broads. The Norfolk Broads has the same status as National Parks. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) affords great weight to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in the Broads, which along with National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The NPPF is explicit in requiring the scale and extent of development within the Broads to be limited.
9. The area surrounding the appeal property is notably green, open and spacious. The isolated location of the dwelling means that its western side in particular appears prominently in near and distant views, especially from the River Bure and its vicinity. The traditional elements of the appeal property results in much of the dwelling appearing low-key and in keeping with the rural nature of the area.
10. During my site visit I observed that whilst comprehensively extended, the host property largely maintains a "cottage-farmhouse"-type appearance. It appears relatively low in height due to a main roof-form comprising a traditional part catslide-style roof, with modest dormers; and its fenestration is dominated by main windows with a traditional grille pattern. These features help the host property, which is widely visible, to appear generally comfortable within its largely open rural surroundings.
11. By way of contrast to the above, the development the subject of this appeal appears as a prominent flat-roofed and expansively glazed addition, appearing incongruous and awkward against the host dwelling.
12. The absence of any set-down at ridge height and the absence of any notable set-back from the eaves results in a flat-roofed dormer of such mass that it appears boxy and bulky, to the extent that it dominates and detracts significantly from the overall appearance of the extension to which it is attached.
13. The significant harm arising from the above is exacerbated as a result of the prominent location of the development, being highly visible from a range of public views, near and far. As a consequence, its incongruous appearance draws attention to a development which unduly dominates its surroundings.
14. Further to the above, the proposed addition of a balcony and external stairway to the development (not yet completed) would serve to add to its bulk and dominant form and would fail to appear in keeping with other elements of the host property.
15. In addition, whilst I note the appellants' reference to the use of specialist film to reduce glare and light emission, this would reduce rather than eliminate day-time glare and the emission of light during hours of darkness. Whilst not so harmful as to justify dismissal of the appeal, the potential for some glare and light emission from the development's very large windows, facing directly towards the River Bure in such a prominent location, are factors that add weight to the decision below.
16. Taking the above into account, I find that the proposed development would serve to harm the area's identified attributes. This would be contrary to the

NPPF and to Local Plan¹ Policies DM16, DM21 and DM22, which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.

Other Matters

17. In support of the development, the appellants draw attention to other developments elsewhere. However, none of those developments are the same as the development before me, such that they provide for direct comparison. Notwithstanding this, I have found that, in any case, the development the subject of this appeal would result in significant harm, hence the decision below.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR

¹ Broads Authority, Local Plan for the Broads 2015-2036 (2019).