

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 April 2023

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18th May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/D0840/D/23/3314175

Owls Cottage, Killiganoon, Carnon Downs, Cornwall, TR3 6JT

- 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 & Mrs Daniel & Kim Lawrence against the decision of Cornwall Council.
 - The application Ref PA22/05744, dated 22 June 2022, was refused by notice dated 14 October 2022.
 - The development proposed is alterations and additions to existing dwelling including first floor extension to original dwelling and construction of detached garage.
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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 property.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is a large plot with a detached dwelling having a single storey older element and more recent single storey link, two storey part, cat slide component and conservatory. The oldest part is of traditional design. It appears that there would have been an association with the Grade II Listed Building known as Killiganoon Manor to the south west. The locality is rural and to the east and south of the site are fields and a section of woodland. The proposal is as described above.
 4. I can see that through the use of some consistency of materials the Appellants are seeking to bring some sense of uniformity to the building. However, to my mind the planned works would appear as a range of disparate forms which would come together in a visually-uncomfortable poorly-designed final dwelling. There is very little within the proposals which could be said to draw upon local rural cues. The varied window shapes and often over-sized form and top-heavy arrangement would look particularly ill-at-ease and inappropriate. The conflicting roof forms would be similarly alien and jarring on the eye. The building would have no legibility on its front elevation or main entrance arrangements, the elevational pattern would seem almost random.
 5. The oldest and most interesting part of the existing structure would be swamped by extensive and inappropriate new works above, in its hip to gable
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and beyond to its other side. Leaving the old porch and chimney, which would appear mis-positioned abutting an enlarged roof, would simply not pay sufficient regard to the older interesting cottage element. There is an architectural and period story on this site which would be lost via the influx of inappropriate extensions and alterations. Regrettably this scheme would neither be suitably innovative or traditional in my opinion it simply lacks design logic.

6. I can appreciate that the Appellants are seeking to visually improve the rather incoherent later-built form which is found on this site but regrettably in my opinion the route proposed is not an appropriate one. I am not persuaded either by the references to possible fall-backs of 'permitted development' extensions or roof alterations; I doubt anything would be comparable and, in any event, I have a scheme before me to assess on its own aesthetic merits within the planning appeal regime.
7. Policy 12 of the Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010-2030 and Policy D1 and of the Feock Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017-2030 are relevant. Taken together and amongst other matters they seek to ensure high quality design with development reflecting local distinctiveness, protecting rural character and identity, and embodying sensitive scale and detailing. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal scheme would conflict with these policies. It would also run contrary to the parallel objectives of the Cornwall Design Guide 2021 (DG). Whilst that document cannot be expected to cover every eventuality, I do note in Section 4.2 that there is applicable commentary on matters such as ensuring suitable building mass, using roof forms drawn from context, and not using an existing insensitive building as a precedent for acceptability.

Other matters

8. I do understand the Appellants' wish to improve internal space and there would be no argument that externally the current arrangement could benefit from suitably designed alterations. I can see that thought has been given to, amongst other matters, external materials, garaging arrangements, tree positions, sustainability credentials and consideration for the original internal layout of the cottage. However, whilst I have carefully considered all the factors raised by the Appellants, I am not at all persuaded that these points individually or collectively negate the aesthetic demerits I have identified; they do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to the main issue identified above.
9. I confirm that the National Planning Policy Framework has been considered; the Council's policies and DG which I cite mirror relevant objectives within that document.
10. I should add that I am well aware that there are a range of opinions across the spectrum from residents, the Council and the Appellants on matters of applicability of curtilage listing and non-designated heritage asset status, or neither of these. However, I do not have sufficient information to hand to reach a firm conclusion on heritage related matters and, in this case, I do not need to do so in any event. Taken on its own merits and looking at *general* design related policies the appeal scheme has failed to reach a baseline benchmark of good quality design; without considering any question of heritage the proposal has fallen at the first hurdle.

Overall conclusion

11. For the reasons given above I conclude that the proposed development would have unacceptable effects on the character and appearance of the host property. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR