



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 8 November 2023

by JP Sargent BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 December 2023

Appeal A: APP/D1265/W/22/3308419

The Old Farmhouse, Darknoll Lane, Okeford Fitzpaine, Dorset DT11 0RP

- 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 C and Mrs K Sweeney against the decision of Dorset Council.
 - The application Ref P/HOU/2022/00725, dated 2 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 21 July 2022.
 - The development proposed is to remove existing single storey extension and porch, erect replacement single storey extension, undertake various external and internal alterations, add an Air Source Heat Pump, install a swimming pool, erect a pool house and erect greenhouse.
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Appeal B: APP/D1265/Y/22/3308425

The Old Farmhouse, Darknoll Lane, Okeford Fitzpaine, Dorset DT11 0RP

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr C and Mrs K Sweeney against the decision of Dorset Council.
 - The application Ref P/LBC/2022/00726, dated 2 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 21 July 2022.
 - The works proposed are to remove existing single storey extension and porch, erect replacement single storey extension, undertake various external and internal alterations and erect greenhouse.
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Decisions

Appeal A: APP/D1265/W/22/3308419

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted to remove existing single storey extension and porch, erect replacement single storey extension, undertake various external and internal alterations, add an Air Source Heat Pump, install a swimming pool, erect a pool house and erect a greenhouse at The Old Farmhouse, Darknoll Lane, Okeford Fitzpaine, Dorset, DT11 0RP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P/HOU/2022/00725, dated 2 February 2022, subject to the conditions in Conditions Schedule A below.

Appeal B: APP/D1265/Y/22/3308425

2. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted to remove existing single storey extension and porch, erect replacement single storey extension, undertake various external and internal alterations and erect greenhouse at The Old Farmhouse, Darknoll Lane, Okeford Fitzpaine, Dorset DT11 0RP in accordance with the terms of the application Ref P/LBC/2022/00726 dated 2 February 2022 subject to the conditions in Conditions Schedule B below.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the works on the special architectural and historic interest of this listed building, and whether they would harm its significance.

Reasons

4. The *National Planning Policy Framework* (the Framework) says that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and great weight should be given to their conservation. This is reflected in Policy 5 of the *North Dorset Local Plan Part 1*, which aims to sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets.
5. The Old Farmhouse is a 2-storey Grade II listed building and dates from the 17th Century, though possibly with an earlier core. Its materials and detailing reflect its rural origins and its vernacular construction. Moreover, its main frontage is not unified, but displays evidence of how it has evolved over time. Such factors contribute to its special architectural and historic interest, and mean its significance is both historic and architectural.
6. On the evidence before me it would appear the building had a linear form up until the 1980's, but then substantial extensions were added mainly to the rear. Although these sympathise with the historic character of the building to some degree, they nonetheless have certain design limitations in that regard. However, they are clear and distinct from the older parts, and they tend not to be visible from directly in front of the house. Such factors reduce any adverse impacts these additions may have on the building's significance in general and on its main elevation in particular.
7. An exception to this latter point though is a conservatory that is at the south-western end of the dwelling, which projects from the side of the modern extension, and can be readily seen in the context of the frontage. I understand this also dated initially from the 1980's. It was originally a timber and glazed structure on a parapet wall, but some 13 years ago the roof was changed to slate/tiles. I share the appellants' view that the design of this element is neither bold in its own right nor relates strongly to the significance of the building. As a result, although its pronounced set back from the front elevation reduces its impact, I find it sits uncomfortably on the house, and does not make a positive contribution to its historic integrity.
8. It is proposed to demolish this conservatory and replace it with another. Although the works would extend further rearwards, they would project no closer to the front and no further sideways than what is there now. The new conservatory is described as having a 'contemporary' design, as it would have a flat sedum roof, with extensive glazing on its south-eastern and south-western elevations. The rear would be a solid wall.
9. The materials and form of what is proposed would be notably different to those of the older sections of the house, with the scheme's clean lines contrasting with the more organic nature of the historic parts of the building. However, it would have a bold and independent design that would be read as a clearly modern and distinguished phase of the site's development. When compared to the existing conservatory it would be lower, and, although having a solid rear wall, it would be a lighter structure due to its thinner frames, the presence of a flat roof rather than a pitched one, and the emphasis of glazing on its south-

east elevation, with the lack of a parapet wall. Indeed, the extensive glazing means that from the front few external materials would be apparent. Overall, when taken with its set back, I therefore find that replacing the existing conservatory with what is now proposed would not challenge the older part of the dwelling, confuse its apparent evolution, or dilute its dominance. As such, it would not harm the significance of the listed building or detract from its special architectural and historic interest.

10. The Council expressed a concern about, among other things, the use of a flat roof. However, I see no reason why this need be inappropriate having regard to the siting of the works, the nature of the historic building, the high quality of the design and the impact of what is there now.
11. The greenhouse would be distinct and separate from the dwelling, and it would be set against the fence to the rear of the modern extensions. Given its glazed form, its effects on the setting mean it would not be harmful to the significance of the listed building.
12. The swimming pool has already been created. Again, this, with its pool house, is well away from the dwelling and any impact on the setting of the listed building does not harm its significance. The Air Source Heat Pump would be at the rear against the recent extension while the internal alterations would be focussed on the newer elements of the building and so neither aspect of the proposal would cause harm to the historic significance of The Old Farmhouse.
13. Accordingly, I conclude that the works would not fail to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of this listed building, and would not harm its significance. As such they would not conflict with Local Plan Policy 5, or guidance in the Framework.

Conditions

14. For the avoidance of doubt a commencement condition is required on Appeal B, though not on Appeal A as that has already commenced. For the same reason the works must also be in accordance with the approved plans.
15. Having regard to safeguarding the historic significance of the site, the materials should be agreed in relation to both appeals, while the window details and the nature of internal works should also be agreed in relation to Appeal B.
16. Concerning Appeal A, and in order to ensure it did not detract from the setting of the listed building, the swimming pool should be of a colour to be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. However I see no basis for preventing underwater lighting, while using any part of the development for purposes not incidental to the development could require planning permission if constituting a material change of use, so need not be controlled by condition. I also considered the paving around the pool to be satisfactory.

Conclusion

17. Accordingly I conclude the appeals should be allowed.

JP Sargent

INSPECTOR

Conditions Schedule A

- 1) Unless otherwise approved under the conditions below, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings: 001E (Site location plan and block plan), 002D (Proposed site plan), 003D (Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations), 005C (Proposed pool house and swimming pool), 006 (Existing ground floor plan), LDS/16940-TP1 (Topographic survey) & LDS/16940-MB1 (Partial ground floor plan & elevations).
- 2) Prior to development above damp proof course level, details and samples of all external facing materials for the walls and roof of the side extension to the dwelling shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then be undertaken in accordance with the approved materials.
- 3) Within 3 months of the date of this decision, details of the colour of the interior of the swimming pool shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, and within 3 months of the Local Planning Authority approving those details the interior of the swimming pool shall be finished in the approved colour. The development shall thereafter be retained in that colour.

Conditions Schedule B

- 1) The works authorised by this consent shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this consent.
- 2) Unless otherwise approved under the conditions below, the works shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings (insofar as relevant to this consent): 001E (Site location plan and block plan), 002D (Proposed site plan), 003D (Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations), 004A (Proposed window and door details), 005C (Proposed pool house and swimming pool), 006 (Existing ground floor plan), LDS/16940-TP1 (Topographic survey) & LDS/16940-MB1 (Partial ground floor plan & elevations).
- 3) Prior to works above damp proof course level, details and samples of all external facing materials for the walls and roof of the single storey extension hereby granted shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The works shall then be undertaken in accordance with the approved materials.
- 4) Prior to the installation of any external door or window on the single storey extension hereby granted, drawings and specifications showing the design and construction of external doors and windows (at a scale no less than 1:10) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details only.
- 5) Prior to the removal of a section of wall internally and the lifting of existing lintels, a Method Statement regarding the works including details of materials, making good work to the surfaces and a schedule of the works, shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the works shall proceed with the approved details only.