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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 April 2024

**by K Winnard LL.B Hons Solicitor**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/M2325/D/24/3339481**

**Rose Cottage, The Village, Singleton, Poulton-Le-Fylde, Lancashire, FY6 8LL**

- 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 Sean Donnelly against the decision of Fylde Borough Council.
  - The application Ref. 23/0827 dated 5 December 2023, was refused by notice dated 29 January 2024.
  - The development proposed is the formation of a rear dormer and two roof lights to front roof slope.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Main Issue

2. The main issue in the appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area having regard to its conservation area status.

### Reasons

#### *Character and Appearance*

3. The appeal property, Rose Cottage, is located within the Singleton Conservation Area (SCA) where there is a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character of the area. In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, in this case the SCA.
4. No SCA analysis is before me but I noted from my site visit that Singleton is a predominantly linear settlement with a rural village feel surrounded by open countryside. The architectural style of the village varies but it is predominantly traditional in design and materials. On my site visit I noted that the village as a whole retains the style and appearance of the original built development and whilst there was a variety of design in roof slopes, dormers were not a prevalent feature. Overall, the village has a general sense of coherence reflecting a semi-rural character.
5. Rose Cottage, one of a pair of a semi-detached property, lies at the edge of the village, set back from the road located between a farm with a variety of agricultural buildings and the Miller Arms Public House to the west.

Notwithstanding that both the farm buildings and the public house are prominent features in this location, Rose Cottage and its neighbouring attached dwelling, Ken View, are nonetheless highly visible when approaching the village from the south east and south or along Church Road in views from the north east and north.

6. The proposal would see the introduction of a flat roof rear dormer and insertion of two roof lights to the front roof slope. The dormer would be aligned with the ridge, set back from the gable end wall, but adjacent to the party wall with the adjoining semi-detached property and would occupy over approximately 62% of the roof slope. As such it does not comply with guidance set out in the Council's Extending Your Home -Supplementary Planning Document Design Note 6 (Dormers and Roof Extensions)(SPD) which requires, amongst other things, that dormers should be contained well within the body of the roof and not normally occupy an area greater than 35% of the area of the plane of the roof into which it will be sited. Fenestration details would also not comply with those set out in the guidance.
7. Whilst set away from the side elevation of the dwelling, the size and increase in mass in the roof slope of Rose Cottage would add considerable bulk to the dwelling. Despite the use of matching materials, it would result in an unsympathetic and pronounced feature out of keeping with its appearance. Set back from the side elevation, views of the rear dormer would be limited when approaching the village from the south, however this would not be the case in views across the open fields from the north. Notwithstanding the distances in this instance, my observations were that the open countryside setting to the rear of Rose Cottage and Ken View means that they can clearly be seen from the road. Whilst Ken View has been subject to a side extension, its subservient style and design means that it is well assimilated into the host dwelling and does not significantly impact on the open views obtained in this regard. However, this would not be the case with regard to the proposed rear dormer where due to its width and scale it would be unduly noticeable. It would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling and the identified semi-rural quality of the area.
8. I appreciate that the proposed extension would be read in the context of the roof forms of the public house and the agricultural buildings, and that the public house itself has, amongst other roof styles, a flat roof dormer. However this is to the side of the public house facing away from the village and is not unduly prominent. As such it does not unduly dominate these views, nor does it in itself provide justification for development which would otherwise be unacceptable. Further, I am not aware of the full circumstances in which the flat roof dormer came to be accepted and as such I attach little weight to this matter.
9. My attention has also been drawn to front flat roof dormers on a development elsewhere in the village and which I observed on my site visit. However, in this instance the front dormers are a common feature within the design of the dwellings. Nor is it clear when this development was undertaken and whether it predates the designation of the SCA. As a result, direct parallels of these examples with the scheme before me are not easily drawn. Since the matters under consideration are specific to this site and its immediate surroundings I have given them limited weight. Nor does the variety of roof styles and designs

within the SCA provide sufficient mitigation to overcome the harmful effect of the development within the area as identified above.

10. I note that the appeal scheme is a resubmission following the refusal of an earlier application and acknowledge that the appellant has sought to address the concerns of the Council. However the proposed dormer would nevertheless result in harm as I have outlined above. Whether or not a similar size dormer could be built under permitted development rights outside a conservation area does not persuade me that the proposal before me should be granted planning permission given the harm I have identified.
11. I note that the Council does not express concerns within its decision notice in relation to the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties and that no concerns are expressed with regard to parking and access arrangements. However the absence of harm in these respects does not weigh in favour of the appeal scheme as now proposed.
12. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal would neither enhance or preserve the SCA. Given the scale and size of the proposal within the SCA as a whole, the harm that would arise would be localised and the impact of the SCA would be less than substantial within the meaning of the Framework. Under such circumstances, paragraph 208 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. No public benefits have been put forward in support of the proposal but I note it would provide additional living space and improvements to the quality of the overall housing stock. Whilst this would be a public benefit it would be modest and insufficient to outweigh the harm I have found. Accordingly the proposal would fail to comply with national policy.
13. For the above reasons I conclude that the proposal would not preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the SCA. It would also cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of Rose Cottage, and the area. It would therefore conflict with Policies GD7 and ENV5 of the Fylde Local Plan to 2023 (incorporating Partial Review)(Local Plan) which together require that development relates well to the surrounding context, to make a positive contribution to the character of a conservation area and not to have an unacceptable impact on townscape and landscape or roofscape. It would also conflict with guidance contained within the SPD in relation to dormer extensions.

## **Conclusion**

14. For the reasons given and having regard to all matters raised, I hereby dismiss the appeal.

*K Winnard*

INSPECTOR