



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 August 2024

by R Kent BA (Hons) MTP DipM MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 August 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/U1105/W/24/3341596

The Firs, Road Past Trixhayes Farm, Woodbury Salterton, Devon EX5 1ER

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Lee Galan against the decision of East Devon District Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/2244/FUL.
 - The development proposed is extension to dwelling and associated works.
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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 existing dwelling and its surroundings.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a predominantly two storey white rendered house with a grey slate hipped roof. It has a single storey flat roof garage adjacent to the house on its northern side beyond which is a timber outbuilding with grey slate ridged roof used as a car port and store. To the rear of the house on its western side are two single storey, white rendered projections. The house has predominantly white framed, UPVC windows.
4. It sits in spacious grounds in a rural location with fields to the north, south and west. A large area of lawn lies between the house and Sanctuary Lane, a narrow lane along its eastern boundary flanked by high hedges serving occasional other properties. The house is situated at the junction of the lane and the A3052. Overall, the character and appearance of the area is one of spacious, green countryside interspersed with occasional houses and other buildings of different forms.
5. The proposed development would replace the existing single storey garage block with a two storey addition on a larger footprint than the existing garage. Its upper storey would be predominantly timber clad with the exception of the flat roof rear link extension which would be white rendered.
6. Strategy 7 of the East Devon Local Plan 2013 - 2031 (EDLP) is a strategic policy which only permits development in the countryside where it is in accordance with a specific Local Plan policy and where it would not harm, amongst other things, the environmental qualities of the area within which it is located. One such Local Plan policy is Policy D1 which requires that scale, massing, height, fenestration and materials in new development relate well to their context.
7. The scale of the extension would cause it to dominate the existing house. Although set back from the principal elevation of the house, it would appear as

a substantial, shed-like addition to it. The shallow roof pitch coupled with the mass and rectangular shape of the two storey block would be jarringly at odds with the character and appearance of the existing dwelling. This would be accentuated by the height of the proposed pitched roof, which would exceed much of that of the existing house, and the proposed window designs and positions would not reflect the existing pattern of fenestration. Whilst the extension would be set back from the façade of the house, and thereby allow the house to retain some of its previous identity, this would not be sufficient to overcome the adverse impact caused by the scale and form of the proposal.

8. The Design Statement submitted by the Appellant indicates that the development is intended to replicate its rural setting through a contemporary design using timber cladding. The Design Statement refers to examples of timber buildings in the vicinity. Each scheme must be considered and determined on its own merits and I am not aware of the planning status of those other buildings. However, from what I could see on my site visit they are predominantly free-standing buildings rather than substantial extensions to existing white rendered houses as is proposed in this instance. Whilst timber cladding can be an appropriate material, this is dependent on the context of the development. In this case, the appeal proposal is more closely related both visually and physically to the existing house than other buildings and the combination of the scale, form and materials of the extension would harm the character and appearance of the house.
9. The impact of this on the views from the adjoining roads and on the wider countryside would, to some extent, be mitigated by the trees and hedgerows along the road boundaries. However, the development would still be visible from some limited viewpoints through gaps in the vegetation, through gateways and from adjoining land from where the harmful increase in the scale of building would be apparent.
10. For the reasons given, the proposals would harm the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and its surroundings which conflicts with EDLP policy D1 and Strategy 7 which protect the countryside from harmful development and ensure that new development relates well to its context. For the same reason, it would conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework's policies for achieving well-designed and beautiful places.

Other Matters

11. Reference is made to the manner in which the planning application was handled by the Council and the lack of communication from it. This is a matter which should be pursued through other processes. It does not have a bearing on my consideration of the appeal.

Conclusion

12. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

R Kent

INSPECTOR