



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 September 2024

by E Grierson BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 October 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/J1535/D/24/3338911

Waters Farm Cottage, 252 Ongar Road, Stapleford Abbots, Romford, Essex RM4 1RD

- 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 Carl Isherwood against the decision of Epping Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref is EPF/2382/23.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with rear dormer and Velux windows to the front.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is occupied by a two-storey semi-detached dwelling, located in a remote rural location. The style and appearance of the appeal property is in keeping with its rural surrounds with a traditional cottage-like appearance. The proposal includes a flat roof rear dormer extension, which is the subject of this appeal. Due to the remote location of the appeal site, the proposed dormer would not be readily visible from the public realm. However, due to its position on the existing roof slope of the dwelling, it would be a noticeable addition to the property which would be visible in the surrounding area, particularly from the adjoining property.
4. Whilst not an overly large addition to the host property and below the main ridge height of the dwelling, the proposed dormer would project above the gabled roof ridge. When viewed from the side elevations, the upward projection of this dormer and its flat roof design would appear as an overly bulky and incongruous addition to this traditional, rural property, at odds with its existing character. This would not be mitigated by the use of materials which match the existing roof.
5. It is noted that a reduction in the height of the proposed dormer would result in a low floor to ceiling height which would be unlikely to provide satisfactory living conditions for the occupiers of the host dwelling. Nevertheless, this would not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling identified above.

6. Therefore, as the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling, it would conflict with Policy DM9 of the Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011-2033 (2023). This policy seeks to ensure that all new development achieves a high quality of design which relates positively to its context. It would also conflict with the general design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

7. The appellant contends that permitted development rights would allow for a dormer on the appeal property which is larger than the appeal proposal. However, no evidence has been provided to demonstrate this or suggest that the appellant intends to construct such a dormer under permitted development rights should planning permission not be granted. Therefore, this fallback position is given limited weight in my consideration of the appeal.
8. It is noted that planning permission was granted for extensions to the adjoining property, 2 Water Cottages, which included dormers to the roof. However, from the plans provided by the appellant, these are much smaller than the dormer proposed on the appeal site with a pitched roof design. Therefore, the dormers on the neighbouring property do not set a precedent for the appeal proposal in this instance.
9. It has been highlighted that there is a grade II listed building, Barn at Waters Farm, located to the north east of the appeal site. Limited information has been submitted regarding this building. However, it appears that its significance is derived, at least in part, from its historic nature and from its status as a well-preserved example of its age and type. Its relationship with the adjacent buildings, including the appeal property, contributes to how this asset is appreciated and this setting makes a positive contribution to the significance of this listed building.
10. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the decision maker, in considering whether to grant planning permission for the development which affects a listed building or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any feature of special architectural or historic interest. The Council have not raised any concerns in relation to the impact of the proposed development on this listed building. Whilst the appeal site is in close proximity to this listed building and its surrounds, the two are visually separate and well screened from each other by the adjoining property. As such, the proposed development would have a neutral impact on the setting and significance of this listed building.

Conclusion

11. However, for the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, the proposal would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole and I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

E Grierson

INSPECTOR