



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 November 2024

by R Kent BA (Hons) MTP DipM MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1153/D/24/3345111

Appletree Cottage, Lane To Carters Barn, Bridestowe, Devon EX20 4QH

- 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 B Shelley against the decision of West Devon Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 0178/24/HHO.
 - The development proposed is Install conservatory to the front of the property.
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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 building including its effect on the significance of the building as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA).

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a former stone barn which was converted to a dwelling in the 1980s. It derives its significance as a NDHA from being part of a historic group of buildings forming part of the Churndon farmstead. It is identifiable on the 1880 and 1904 OS maps with Churndon also featuring on the Tithe map and in the Devon and Dartmoor Historic Environment Record where the farmstead is recorded as "Early Medieval to Post Medieval – 1066 AD to 1750 AD (Between)".
4. The character and appearance of the building and its setting has been altered as a result of its conversion to residential use including the addition of a conservatory and shed to the rear, a substantial garage to the side and solar panels and roof lights on its roof. This has reduced its significance as a heritage asset. Nevertheless, the front elevation remains a simple, plain façade with the irregularly shaped timber lintels over the window openings reflecting its previous use as a barn and part of the farmstead. As a result, it still has a moderate level of significance as a NDHA.
5. The proposed front addition, although relatively small, would project forward of the front wall of the building. Whilst there is currently a small canopy projecting out over the front door, this is unobtrusive in the appearance of the building when viewed from in front and from the side. In contrast, the proposal, would be a much more substantial feature. The Council's "Traditional Farm Buildings" design guide, whilst not part of the development plan, indicates that the general absence of extensions and additions to traditional

farm buildings is an aspect of their historic interest and authentic character. Even though the former barn is now a dwelling, its front elevation remains the most important and prominent elevation. In conjunction with the proposed use of dark PVCu materials, the form of the new addition would be jarringly at odds with its simple façade and existing timber windows and lintels. This would harm the character and appearance of the former barn and its significance as a heritage asset.

6. Whilst a conservatory has been added to the rear of the building, it is located on a less prominent elevation and is largely screened by the surrounding vegetation and rising land to the rear of the building. The adjacent predominantly stone faced double garage appears as a free standing structure separate to, and set back from, the front of the building and therefore allows the former barn to retain its separate identity. Notwithstanding this, neither the garage nor the conservatory justify the harm caused to the character and appearance of the building by the current proposal which must be considered and determined on its own merits.
7. Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2019 (JLP) Policy DEV21 and the National Planning Policy Framework require a balanced judgement to be made having regard to the scale of any harm and the significance of the heritage asset. In this instance, the building has a moderate level of significance as a NDHA and even though the building fronts a farm track and would not be apparent from a public road, a medium level of harm would be caused to it by the proposal.
8. The proposal would have the benefit of providing better weather proofing, security and thermal efficiency and I give this some limited weight in favour of the scheme. This does not outweigh the harm caused to the significance of the NDHA to which I attach great weight. Reference is made to other similar local constructions. However, I have not been provided with details of their location or nature and am not aware of their planning status. I can therefore give them little weight.
9. As a consequence, for the reasons given, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the building and its significance as a NDHA in conflict with JLP Policies TTV29 and DEV21 regarding extensions to dwellings and development affecting the historic environment.

Conclusion

10. 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