



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 December 2024

by **C Butcher BSc MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/U1105/D/24/3349512

Littlebrook, Venlake End, Uplyme, Devon DT7 3SF

- 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 Stephen Condell against the decision of East Devon District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/0542/FUL.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of existing single storey garage and store room; erection of two story side extension.
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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 area, including the scenic beauty of the East Devon National Landscape.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located on Venlake End, a cul-de-sac located on the edge of the village of Uplyme. The street is characterised by detached houses which share some similarities, including elevations that comprise of stone or a mixture of stone and render. Nevertheless, the houses on this road are of a variety of sizes and styles and so the existing harmony is largely limited to materials used. The site is also located within the East Devon National Landscape. Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty within National Landscapes.
4. In this instance, the proposed development would involve the demolition of the existing garage and store room, and the construction of a relatively large two storey extension. It is obvious that the proposal would reduce the gap between Littlebrook and the neighbouring dwelling of Bromleigh. However, there would still be a reasonable distance between the two, and as such, it does not seem to me that the proposal would erode the spaciousness of the area to an extent that could constitute harm.
5. Furthermore, while the extended dwelling would be quite significantly bigger than at present, I am of the view that it would not look out of place when considered in the context of the homes immediately opposite, including Greenhills House, which are larger and more imposing than the current appearance of Littlebrook.

6. In terms of materials, the exterior of the ground floor would be rendered. In contrast, the first floor area would have a substantial amount of wooden cladding on the north, south and east elevations. It would also have a relatively shallow pitched roof. While these elements may look quite different to the predominant character of the majority of homes on Venlake End, it seems to me that the completed dwelling would be of a pleasing design. In addition, given that Venlake End is fairly well concealed by mature trees, it is clear that the proposal could not have any impact on the wider character or scenic beauty of the National Landscape.
7. However, Appendix 1 of the Uplyme Neighbourhood Plan, July 2017 (the NP) provides a design guide for the area. Guideline 5 concerns exterior walls and states that they should be faced in solid natural chert, rendering or a mixture of both. As such, while I acknowledge that this is guidance rather than policy, the proposed development would clearly not adhere to this requirement.
8. The appellant has provided examples of other extensions that have gained permission within the village. In particular, an extension to Hillside, which is adjacent to Littlebrook, was previously permitted with a significant amount of wooden cladding on the exterior. I do not have the full details of that case before me, and it is not clear how the Council assessed the proposal against the guidance contained within the NP. However, in any event, the existence of a small number of developments that do not accord with the NP does not provide any justification for departing from it in this instance. To do so would undermine the purpose of the NP which forms part of the development plan for the area. The fact that the Parish Council supported the application does not alter that position.
9. I have not found that the proposed development would result in harm as such, and it would therefore conform with Strategy 46 of the East Devon Local Plan, 2013 – 2031 (the LP), the relevant aspects of which seek to preserve character and appearance, including within the National Landscape. However, there would be conflict with LP Policy D1 and Strategy 48, as well as NP Policies UEN2, UEN3 and Guidance 5 of Appendix 1 in terms of the materials used and the requirement to adhere to local design statements.

Other Matters

10. The appellant has suggested that the design of the extension could be altered via a condition. However, removing the wooden cladding would fundamentally alter the appearance of the dwelling and would not accord with the approved plans before me. As such, this matter could only be addressed through the submission of a new planning application.

Conclusion

11. The proposal would conflict with the development plan when read as a whole. There are no material considerations, either individually or in combination, that outweigh the development plan conflict. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

C Butcher

INSPECTOR