



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 December 2024

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C1760/W/24/3350179

Thistledown Cottage, Church Lane, Goodworth Clatford, Andover SP11 7HL

- 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 Ms Fiona Cross against the decision of Test Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref. is 24/00836/FULLN.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a 2-bay garage, garden store and attic home office building.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for the construction of a 2-bay garage, garden store and attic home office building at Thistledown Cottage, Church Lane, Goodworth Clatford, Andover in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. 24/00836/FULLN, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions in the attached Schedule.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed garage outbuilding on the setting of Thistledown Cottage, a Grade II listed building, and thereby the consequential effect on the significance of this designated heritage asset.

Reasons

3. The Council is concerned that both the scale and siting of the proposed garage outbuilding would be inappropriate because of the effect on the designated heritage asset. Ostensibly, there is some merit in this argument, as at present the full width of Thistledown Cottage's principal elevation is seen at the first moment of entry from the track past the curtilage of Newlands into the site. The aspect is across the first curve of the gravel driveway with lawns to either side. And together with views of the adjoining field to the south, there is a pleasing perception of the openness of the setting, due to the absence of any outbuilding or domestic paraphernalia.
4. This absence of built form is in marked contrast to the large scale and bulk of the neighbouring Newlands, with its multi-gabled eastern elevation, ground floor attached outbuildings and the two outbuildings of contrasting sizes that form the boundary with the appeal site. The proposed siting of the appeal garage outbuilding on that boundary would partially obstruct and affect these agreeable elements of the setting, whilst the quality of the view from the public right of way would also be slightly diminished due to the reduced separation distance of the listed building from the collective built form to the west.

5. With all that said, the proposed block plan on Drawing No. 22091 PL101A and the proposed site layout (Roof) Plan on Drawing No. 22091 PL102A in my view clearly illustrate the relatively small footprint of the proposed building compared to the very considerable footprint of the house and its substantial distance from the southwest corner of Thistledown Cottage (and because of its elongated form, therefore the majority of the dwelling). The Drawings also illustrate that the perpendicular siting of the proposed outbuilding relative to the dwelling is easily the optimum choice in terms of minimising any harmful effect as it visually counters the historically contrived linear form of the Cottage.
6. As regards height, the back-to-back siting with the boundary building at Newlands and its very similar design and scale would be such as to visually tie in the garage outbuilding to the larger scale and more prominent built form of Newlands, or *'meld into the view of both properties from 'the Park'....'* as the Parish Council has observed. The height is lower than that of the listed building and appropriate to the garage building's functions. And in my view a reduced height in this context would be of lesser design merit and arguably harmfully incongruous.
7. Accordingly, I can give the Council's view that together with Newlands the proposed outbuilding would have *'an overbearing impact'* on the setting of the listed building and that it *'would begin to compete for dominance with the listed building'* only very limited weight. In paragraphs 3 and 4 above I give a small amount of credence to the Council's objection, but when taken as a whole I agree with Forum Heritage Services view for the appellant that the proposal is for an appropriately scaled functional building of vernacular construction. And also that it is complementary to the setting of the listed building, or at worst neutral. I am therefore satisfied that in either case Thistledown Cottage's significance as a designated heritage asset would not be affected.
8. For these reasons the appeal scheme would on balance not conflict with Policies E1 and E9 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan 2011-2029 DPD 2016; Policies SP1 and BE1 of the Goodworth Clatford Development Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018-2029, or with Government policy in Section 16: 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment' of the National Planning Policy Framework December 2024.
9. I shall therefore allow the appeal. The Council has suggested some conditions and I agree that these are reasonable and necessary. A condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans is needed for the avoidance of doubt and is in the interests of proper planning. A condition requiring the approval of external materials will ensure the garage outbuilding is acceptable in appearance and will sustain the significance of the heritage asset. Finally, a condition in respect of external lighting will prevent disturbance to bats, a protected species.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby approved shall begin not later than three years from the date of this Decision;
- 2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing Nos. 22091 PL101A & 22091 PL102A;
- 3) No development shall take place above damp proof course level of the development hereby approved until samples and details of the materials and finishes to be used in the construction of all external surfaces have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 4) Any external lighting on the development hereby approved shall be in accordance with the best practice guidance guidelines outlined by the Bat Conservation Trust and the Institute of Lighting Professionals Guidance Note: 08/23 'Bats and artificial lighting at night'. Prior to the erection of any external lighting a Lighting Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan advised by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, including details of how steps 1 to 5 of the Guidance are to be undertaken. The external lighting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained in good working order.