
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 February 2018

by Caroline Mulloy BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 21st February 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/E2734/D/17/3188805

Sawpitts Farm, Laverton, Ripon, North Yorkshire HG4 3SY

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Simon Riley against the decision of Harrogate Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 17/03789/FUL, dated 23 August 2017, was refused by notice dated 27 October 2017.
 - The development proposed is first floor and two storey extension (revised scheme).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property, the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises of a small cluster of buildings located at the end of a long track close to the settlement of Laverton. It lies within the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
4. The host dwelling is constructed of stone and is one and a half storeys in height with a strong horizontal emphasis. It has been considerably extended including a first floor extension, two storey rear extension, single storey side extension and detached garage. It is proposed to further extend the property by way of a first floor extension over the existing single storey side extension and a two storey forward projecting extension.
5. Whilst the existing property has been significantly altered to the rear, the front elevation of the property retains a strong linear form with an irregular pattern of fenestration. This relatively simple form is reflective of its former use as part of a barn. Although the property has been extended to the side, the extension is single storey and set back from the rear elevation and, therefore, clearly appears subservient to the host property. Furthermore, it retains the simple, linear form and architectural integrity of the front elevation.
6. The proposal would create an additional floor above the existing single storey side extension. The extension would project approximately 3m beyond the front elevation disrupting the building line and compromising the characteristic

linear form of the front elevation. Furthermore, due to the scale, height and forward projection the extension would fail to appear subservient to the host property. Taking these factors in combination the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host property.

7. The appeal site is situated within the AONB and within Area 33, the River Laver Corridor, of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment. It defines the river valley as a distinct area through the surrounding intensively farmed grassland. Buildings are scattered along the valley floor including farmsteads and two mills. Traditional buildings are local sandstone and stone slate or blue slate roofs. There is a good network of footpaths crossing the valley. It identifies that the area is sensitive to changes in the nature of any manmade structures within the corridor.
8. Although altered significantly to the rear, the front elevation of the appeal property, nevertheless, retains a traditional vernacular appearance. Due to the location of the property and also the hedge which runs alongside the road, views of the proposal from the road would be limited. However, whilst there are some trees to the south east of the property, the landscape is that of open fields to the south west enabling clear views of the front elevation from Missies Lane which lies to the south. I acknowledge that the appeal site is situated in a valley; however, due to the elevated position of Missies Lane, the proposed extension would be visible at a distance in winter months when the hedgerow running to the north of Missies Lane is not in leaf. The proposed extension would, therefore, detract from the traditional appearance of the host property to the detriment of the character and appearance of the AONB and the area generally.
9. I acknowledge that the proposal would only be seen in long distance views from Missies Lane and consequently, the harm to the AONB and the area generally would be limited. Nonetheless, paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. Consequently, although the harm would be limited it, nevertheless, weighs against the proposal. It would, therefore, be contrary to Saved Policy C1 of the Harrogate District Local Plan (HDLP) which states that priority will be given to the conservation of the natural beauty of the Nidderdale AONB landscape.
10. The extension would result in an approximately 18% increase on the footprint of the property as it currently exists; however, the property has been extended significantly in the past. The Council's House Extension and Garages Design Guide (HEGDG) (2005) advises that outside settlements, house extensions that extend the ground floor area of the original house by more than 50% will not normally be permitted unless there is an exceptional household need. However, notwithstanding the percentage increase, the scale and forward projection of the proposal would in any event be contrary to the HEGDG as it would fail to appear subservient to the host property.
11. Direct conflict would also arise with chapter 10 of the HEGDG which contains a general presumption against front extensions as they can appear prominent and incongruous. It would also be contrary to chapter 11 of the HEGDG which requires side extensions to be set back and set down from the host property.

12. Attention is drawn to a proposal for a two storey and single storey rear extension at the appeal property allowed at appeal¹ in 2010. However, the Inspector considered that the rear extensions would not be readily apparent in views from Missies Lane and that the linear form of the house would remain dominant. This case is, therefore, not directly comparable to the appeal proposal which limits the weight which I can attach to it in my Decision.
13. The proposal would have some benefit for the appellant and his family in terms of the provision of additional living accommodation. However, I consider that this benefit would be outweighed by the harm which I have identified. In any event this benefit could be achieved by other means.
14. For the reasons stated, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host property, the AONB and the area. It would, therefore, be contrary to saved Policies H15 and HD20 of the HDLP, Policies EQ2, SG3 and SG4 of the Harrogate District Core Strategy (2009), the HEGDG SPD, the Landscape Character Appraisal and the Harrogate District Heritage Management Guidance (2014) which collectively, amongst other things, seek to ensure that new development has no detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area, respects local distinctiveness of existing buildings and the landscape setting and protects visual amenity and landscape character. Conflict also arises with saved Policy C1 of the HDLP.
15. Reference is made to Planning Policy Statement 7-Sustainable Development in Rural Areas; however, this has been superseded by the Framework. The proposal would be contrary to paragraphs 17, and 56 of the Framework which seek to secure high quality design and also paragraph 115.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons stated, and taking all other considerations into account, the appeal should be dismissed.

Caroline Mulloy

Inspector

¹ Appeal reference: APP/E2734/D/10/2126450