

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 July 2016

by A A Phillips BA(Hons) DipTP MTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 27th July 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/M2325/D/16/3153349

57 Bryning Lane, Ribby With Wrea PR4 2NL

- 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 and Mrs D Holmes against the decision of Fylde Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/0318, dated 3 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 28 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is alterations to existing approved "granny annexe" consisting of raising the roof height to provide additional domestic storage and home office.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this case are the effect of the proposal on:
 - i. the character and appearance of the host property 57 Bryning Lane and the area, generally; and
 - ii. the living conditions of the occupants of the adjoining property, 29 Richmond Avenue with particular reference to outlook, light and sunlight.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site 57 Bryning Lane is a substantial detached two storey house set within a large curtilage on the edge of the village of Wrea Green. Within its curtilage is a long and narrow detached single storey pitched roof granny annexe to the rear of the main house. The single storey building currently appears as a subservient ancillary outbuilding.
 4. There are a number of detached dwellings of various sizes and designs in the immediate vicinity of the site, the majority of which have two storeys. They form a prominent group of buildings overlooking open fields to the south. The appeal site, including the granny annexe and nearby dwellings form a clearly visible mass of built form when viewed from Bryning Lane on the approach to the village.
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5. It is notable that the single storey annexe is seen against the backdrop of trees and landscaping in the gardens of properties on Richmond Avenue. As a consequence of its current height and scale it offers some relief from the otherwise almost continuous line of two storey development along this edge of the village.
6. The proposed alterations, which include raising the eaves and ridge height of the building and installing three dormer windows in the roof facing the open countryside, would alter the physical relationship between No 57 and the annexe. I understand that its function would remain as ancillary to the main dwelling and its height would be lower than No 57 and other properties in the vicinity. Nonetheless, by virtue of its significantly increased height and scale, it would no longer appear as a subservient ancillary building, but as a separate substantial dwelling within its curtilage. As such it would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and its setting.
7. Furthermore, given its prominent position on the approach to Wrea Green, the extended and altered annexe building would contribute to forming a continuous conspicuous building line along the edge of the settlement. Its increased height and scale and the dormer windows would add to its prominence, resulting in it being incongruous within its setting. The visual relief provided by the existing single storey building along this settlement edge would be lost by the increased built form.
8. On this issue I conclude that the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and the area, generally, and contrary to the design requirements of Policy HL5 of the Fylde Borough Local Plan as Altered October 2005 (the Local Plan) and the Extending Your Home Supplementary Planning Document (November 2007)(SPD). It is also contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework requiring good design and National Planning Practice Guidance regarding well designed homes and other buildings.

Living conditions

9. The annexe building is immediately adjacent to and forms a large part of the rear boundary to the private rear garden of 29 Richmond Avenue. The rear garden is larger than some others along Richmond Avenue and has a staggered relationship to No 29. The garden is partly to the rear of the rear garden of No 27. It appears to be a well-used and well maintained garden area with a large lawn, seating areas, planted borders and trees.
10. I noted at my site visit that at mid-afternoon on a summer day the annexe does cause some shading to the rear parts of the garden. The blank brick wall of the annexe which runs along almost the entire rear boundary of the garden is a very dominant feature to the rear of the garden.
11. The eaves height adjacent to the garden and the ridge height would be increased, resulting in a larger blank expanse of brickwork and a materially significant increase in the overall height and scale of the building. This would result in harm to the outlook from the garden.
12. As a consequence of the long separation distances between the annexe building and the rear of properties along Richmond Avenue I do not consider that the development would cause harm to the outlook from the properties themselves.

13. Given the orientation of the building, the development would result in some loss of light to the garden. There would also be some resultant additional shading in the area of the garden adjacent to the building. However, I do not consider that the loss of light and sunlight would be so significant to warrant the refusal of planning permission in this case.
14. Nonetheless, on this matter I find that the development would harm the living conditions of the occupants of 29 Richmond Avenue with particular reference to outlook. It would therefore be contrary to the amenity requirements of Policy HL5 of the Local Plan and the Extending Your Home SPD. It is also contrary to the Framework regarding the amenity standards for existing and future occupants.

Other matters

15. I note that the appellant has submitted evidence with respect to the approach to sustainable development as set out in the Framework, which has three clear dimensions – economic, social and environmental. In order to achieve sustainable development the Framework states that each of these should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
16. Given my conclusions with respect to the effects on the character and appearance of the area I do not consider the proposal would be sustainable development and, as such, would not accord with the overarching aims of the Framework with respect to achieving good design. Furthermore, the limited benefits of the development would not outweigh the concern I have identified with regard to the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of the occupants of the adjoining property.
17. The appellant also refers to National Planning Practice Guidance with reference to guidance on design. I am aware that the Guidance refers to innovation in design and the use of construction techniques that can contribute to achieving well designed homes and buildings. However, there is no evidence to convince me that the development would be innovative in terms of design or construction.

Conclusion

18. For the above reasons I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Alastair Phillips

INSPECTOR