The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 August 2020

by C Coyne BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/B3438/D/20/3253924
Holly Dene, School Road, Bagnall ST9 9JP

- 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 & Mrs Fenton against the decision of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.
- The application Ref SMD/2019/0756, dated 12 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 23 March 2020.
- The development proposed is described on the application form as 'Proposed two storey side extension with extension over existing garage'. (sic)

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for Two storey side extension and orangery at Holly Dene, School Road, Bagnall ST9 9JP in accordance with the terms of the application Ref SMD/2019/0756, dated 12 December 2019, subject to the following conditions:

    1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.

    2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Plans as existing AL(0)01 Rev A; Plans as proposed AL(0)02 Rev J; Elevations as proposed AL(0)03 Rev K.

    3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural Matters

2. The Council have described the development as 'Two storey side extension and orangery'. I note that the appellants have also utilised a similar description on their appeal form. I consider that the Council's revised description provides a succinct and accurate description of the proposal and I have therefore determined the appeal on this basis.

3. The decision notice refers to Policies DC1 and DC2 of the emerging draft Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (EDLP). The Council advise that the EDLP has undergone examination and subsequent modification, details of which have been provided. I also note that the parts of the policies that are most relevant to the appeal proposal refer directly to the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework). Therefore, I have afforded Policies DC1 and DC2 of the EDLP substantial weight.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Bagnall Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a large two storey detached dwelling situated at the end of a row of large detached and semi-detached two storey dwellings. This property was originally built as a 19th century cottage but it has since been extended using more contemporary materials and designs in a manner sympathetic to its historic setting. The proposed development relates to the construction of a two-story and partial ground floor side extension that would create a new bedroom with en-suite bathroom on the first floor and a new snug and orangery on the ground floor.

6. Both the appeal property and the other properties on School Road are situated within the CA. The surrounding area is predominately residential comprising dwellings of varying types and styles, with some, particularly those on School Road, having a more contemporary design and appearance. Several older traditional stone buildings, collectively known as 'Old Hall Farm' are located on the other side of 'The Green'. The appeal site also abuts the village green located at the southernmost end of the village. This is an important portion of green open space which along with the design of the buildings around it contributes to the area's historic character, giving the area the feel of a more traditional rural village, in particular along 'The Green'.

7. A key characteristic of the CA is the view from the village green and principal gateway to the village towards Old Hall Farm a historically significant building[1]. Given the appeal property's location, the proposal would be viewable from several public vantage points on 'The Green'. The appeal site's boundary with the village green comprises a hedgerow approximately 2 metres in height interspersed with mature trees. The village green itself also has several mature trees within it some of which are close to the appeal site boundary with others being located more towards the village green's southern apex and along its nearby outer boundaries.

8. Consequently, I consider that the proposal would be sufficiently screened by the mature trees within the village green, those on the boundary and the existing hedgerow on the boundary when viewed from the southern principal gateway to the village. Indeed, while on site, I viewed the appeal property from this vantage point and whilst this was only a snapshot in time, I found it difficult to see the appeal property from there. As a result, I cannot easily see how the proposal would possibly interfere with the view from the village green or principal gateway point towards Old Hall Farm.

9. I acknowledge that the proposal would also be viewable from some vantage points on 'The Green' particularly when travelling from north to south. However, these vantage points are few and far between and given their locations even if the proposal were visible, it would only be a portion of it that was, and even then I do not consider that this would interrupt any views towards Old Hall Farm or indeed look out of place on the street scene in this location.

[1] Bagnall Conservation Area Appraisal

10. Furthermore, in relation to the proposal's design, the materials to be used would match the existing property and the dwellings nearby. The proposed extension would also be subservient to the host property particularly when viewed from the front and side. While I acknowledge that the materials would not be very traditional i.e. old stone, there is only one other property nearby that has this type of façade, Old Hall Farm, with the other dwellings opposite it on 'The Green' having red-brick or rendered frontages.

11. Accordingly, I consider that the proposal would not have an adverse visual impact or harm the character and appearance of the area even during winter months when the foliage on the trees within the village green and on the trees and hedgerow on the site boundary would be less dense.

12. I also acknowledge that the appeal property has been modestly extended previously with the materials and design of these extensions being complimentary to the existing building and that a proposal like the appeal scheme was previously refused permission due to its scale, form and massing. I also note that the original scheme submitted by the appellants was of a similar size and scale to this. However, the appellants did also submit revised plans showing a more modest extension as per the appeal scheme that is before me, which for the above reasons I consider to be acceptable.

13. As a result, I consider that the proposal would preserve the character of the CA in accordance with the aims of the Framework. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would be consistent with the preservation of the character of the Bagnall Conservation Area and would accord with policies SS1, SS1a, SS6b, DC1 and DC2 of the adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy (March 2014) and the adopted Design Guide 2018 which aim to protect and enhance the historic environment and complement the special character and heritage of the area, amongst other considerations. It would also accord with Policies DC1 and DC2 of the and the policies of The Framework where they seek to serve the same objectives.

Conditions

14. In addition to the standard implementation condition, I have imposed a necessary condition to define the plans with which the scheme should accord in the interest of precision. I have also imposed a condition requiring the use of matching materials in the interests of the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons set out above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

C Coyne

INSPECTOR