Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 March 2015

by Sarah Colebourne MA, MRTPI

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

Decision date: 11 March 2015

Appeal Ref: APP/A2525/D/14/2222910
16 Barrier Bank, Cowbit, Spalding, PE12 6AE

- 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 Starr against the decision of South Holland District Council.
- The application Ref H01-0258-14, dated 26 March 2014, was refused by notice dated 29 May 2014.
- The development proposed is first floor alterations and extension to a chalet bungalow.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for first floor alterations and extension to a chalet bungalow at 16 Barrier Bank, Cowbit, Spalding, PE12 6AE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref H01-0258-14, dated 26 March 2014, subject to the following conditions:

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

    2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 2607-14 01 and 2607-14 02 .

    3) No development shall take place until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within the open countryside, within a wide, open landscape of arable fields in which settlements are dispersed and there are many isolated dwellings. Those that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the rural area are the vernacular style dwellings, many of which are small agricultural workers cottages or large farmsteads. The existing dwelling is a small brick bungalow with a hipped roof. It is

suburban in style and design and contributes little to the character and appearance of the area.

4. The Council considers that the proposal is tantamount to a new dwelling because the existing bungalow would be wholly enveloped and has referred to policy HS17 in the South Holland Local Plan 2006. I disagree with that approach as the plans clearly state that the proposed first floor extension would sit over the existing footprint of the bungalow and do not show new walls at ground floor level other than a small section of infill to provide a utility room. A first floor level would be added and a new pitched roof containing a loft. The appellant's email states that the Council's Building Control officer has accepted the technical feasibility of building over the existing structure. I have therefore considered the proposal as an extension.

5. Policy SG20 in the South Holland Local Plan (2006) requires that extensions are subservient to the host dwelling in terms of scale in order to ensure that they remain appropriate to their setting. The objective of the policy accords broadly with national guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which seeks to ensure that proposals improve the character and quality of an area through high quality design that responds to local character and reinforces local distinctiveness.

6. The extended dwelling would be partially screened from the road in approaches from both directions by the existing, tall trees within the site and would not be clearly seen until reaching a position directly facing it. As it sits at a level significantly below that of the road, it would not be prominent in views from the road.

7. The significantly increased height, scale and mass of the resultant dwelling could not be described as subservient to that of the original bungalow. However, the existing bungalow is of little architectural merit and its suburban form and style contributes little to the character and appearance of the surrounding rural area. Whilst the Council's policy is the appropriate basis for considering many extensions, in this case, the proposal would represent an improvement to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the area by the creation of a dwelling that reflects the scale, form and detail of a larger, traditional farmhouse that would be more appropriate in this rural landscape. The proposed roofing materials of terracotta pantiles and dark stained shiplap boarding and render for the walls are acceptable but I have added a condition requiring samples to be submitted and agreed by the local planning authority as full details have not been given in the application.

8. I conclude that, for these reasons, the proposed extension would make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with the Council's development plan policies. The appeal should be allowed.

Sarah Colebourne

Inspector