



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 April 2012

by Michael R Moffoot DipTP MRTPI DipMgt MCMI

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

Decision date: 25 April 2012

Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/D/12/2171288

10 Longridge Road, Hurst Green, Clitheroe BB7 9QP

- 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 Edwin Smith against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 3/2011/0653 was refused by notice dated 14 November 2011.
 - The development proposed is "erection of timber structure - two-storey to create studio (ground floor) - storage first floor".
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and its surroundings, including its impact on the Hurst Green Conservation Area and the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Reasons

3. The proposed building would be located in the garden of the appeal property, which occupies a steeply sloping site adjacent to Dean Brook and the bridge on Longwood Road. It would be a large, two-storey structure and, despite being set at a lower level than the road and partly screened by the valley sides and trees, would be visible from the footway on the bridge. It would also be seen from The Dene to the north of the site.
4. The general aim of saved Policy G1 of the adopted *Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan* is for development proposals to provide a high standard of building design and landscape quality. The design and materials for the proposed building would reflect those of the detached garden room on the site, which sits comfortably within its surroundings. However, the new building would be significantly larger in order to provide storage space above the studio area. Its size would be excessive, resulting in a discordant and intrusive structure that would be out of keeping with the dwelling, which is identified as a 'Building of Townscape Merit'¹ and remains an important structure in the landscape notwithstanding the various alterations and additions described by the appellant.

¹ *Hurst Green Conservation Area Appraisal*

5. As such, the development would fail to preserve the character of the Conservation Area as required by saved Policy ENV16 of the Local Plan. It would also conflict with the *National Planning Policy Framework* ('the Framework') which requires that great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset (such as a conservation area) when considering the impact of proposed development on the significance of the asset. Furthermore, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area, which has a distinctive semi-rural quality consistent with its AONB designation that Policy ENV1 seeks to protect, conserve and enhance.
6. I now turn to other matters raised in representations. Although the proposal has not attracted local objections, this does not outweigh my concerns regarding the visual impact of the proposal. There may be similar elements to the appeal scheme, but the circumstances of the mill conversion to the south-west of the site appear sufficiently different to negate meaningful comparison. I note the appellant's concerns regarding the Council's handling of the application, but these matters are not relevant to the planning merits of the case. Modifications to the scheme are not before me in this appeal, and I am confined to consideration of the refused proposal.
7. I have concluded that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and its surroundings, including the AONB, and would fail to preserve the character of the Conservation Area. It would therefore conflict with the development plan policies I have referred to and the Framework. For these reasons, the proposal is unacceptable and appeal should be dismissed.

Michael R. Moffoot

Inspector