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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 September 2012

**by Wenda Fabian BA Dip Arch RIBA IHBC**

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

**Decision date: 21 September 2012**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/A/12/2172119**

**Pinfold Cottage, Tosside, Skipton BD23 4SQ**

- 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 D Ashton against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
  - The application Ref 3/2011/0567, dated 13 July 2012, was refused by notice dated 23 January 2012.
  - The development proposed is the erection of a holiday cottage (resubmission).
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the village and the surrounding Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

## Reasons

3. Conversion of the existing single storey building on the appeal site to one bedroom holiday accommodation has already been granted planning permission and this remains extant. The principle of holiday accommodation in this location has thus already been established and is not in dispute. The appeal proposal is for demolition of the existing building and its replacement on the same footprint with a two storey two bedroom holiday cottage.
4. The appeal site is prominent at the heart of Tosside, located at the road junction, with its historic stone marker, and opposite the church and public house, both listed buildings. The existing simple, low, single storey, white-washed, coursed rubblestone building has wide openings on two sides with timber lintels and was probably a storage or cart shed. Although of interest locally as part of the former smithy complex on this site, it does not benefit from any formal protection. Whilst its demolition would open up this end of the village, the backdrop is of mature trees with the beautiful landscape of the AONB beyond and its loss would not be visually harmful within the overall group of buildings at this point.
5. The existing building is sited side-on to the road and at a wide angle to Pinfold Cottage, a recently built large two storey house, with the front corner of each building only about 1 metre apart. Alongside Pinfold Cottage, on its other side

Smithy Cottage is the converted and extended former main building associated with the smithy. As a group, these two buildings now provide a pleasing building mass, which balances the historic buildings opposite and complements the more recent community centre across the junction. In this context, the existing store/cartshed is seen clearly as a smaller secondary building, subservient to the other two.

6. The proposed two storey massing of the replacement building would be only a little lower at the eaves than Pinfold Cottage, almost 2m higher to the eaves than the existing building and higher also than the two storey gable of Smithy Cottage, which is mainly single storey. This would wholly alter the existing balance; it would introduce a two storey building, extremely close alongside the large new house, of only a slightly lesser stature than it and, seen together, they would dwarf Smithy Cottage. Overall the proposal would produce a crowded appearance out of character with the generally lower and wider spaced buildings in this rural context. It would be out of place at this prominent location, would draw attention away from the fine group of listed buildings across the road and produce an ungainly appearance at a focal point at the centre of the village.
7. The height and massing of this proposal are less than those of a previous scheme, but for the reasons set out above this does not make it visually acceptable. The appellant suggests that due to the lesser income that would be generated by a one bedroom holiday let set against the comparatively high cost of converting the existing building, or replacing it at the same size, the approved scheme is not financially viable. Little financial evidence in this regard has been submitted. In any event neither this, nor the acknowledged need for tourist accommodation in the area, outweighs the significant visual harm identified above.
8. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It also defines Core Planning Principles, which include seeking to secure high quality design. Whilst the development plan pre-dates 2004, policy G1 of the *Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan*, 1998, (LP) seeks a high standard of building design and sets out that the density, layout and relationship between buildings is of major importance; this accords with the design objectives of the Framework.
9. I conclude that the proposed replacement building would harm the character and appearance of the village and the surrounding Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It would be contrary to LP policy G1 as well as policy ENV1 which seeks to ensure that the AONB is protected, conserved and enhanced and policy RT1, which promotes development for tourism, unless its design would undermine the character of the plan area.
10. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Wenda Fabian*

Inspector