

## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 November 2018

**by D Cramond** BSc MRTPI

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

**Decision date: 28<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/B9506/D/18/3213140**

**Pylewell Home Farmhouse, Lymington Road, East End, Lymington**

**S041 5SL**

- 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 Mr & Mrs T Warrilow against the decision the New Forest National Park Authority.
  - The application Ref 18/00374, dated 9 May 2018, was refused by notice dated 11 July 2018.
  - The development proposed is the construction of a garden room, following demolition of existing conservatory.
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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 or appearance of the host property and the locality.

### Reasons

3. The appeal property is a large two storey dwelling with rooms in the roof. It is pebble dashed brick with tile hanging at first floor level and encompasses large timber sash windows and substantial chimneys. The site is relatively secluded with boundary landscape and screened from Lymington Road by outbuildings. The oak framed proposal would effectively link the main house to an existing outbuilding as well as creating habitable accommodation at that point and out into part of the courtyard.

### *Character and appearance*

4. The site lies within the Forest South East Conservation Area. There is a duty imposed by Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requiring decision makers to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area (CA). Policy CP7 of the New Forest National Park Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (DPD) (December 2010) (CS) broadly reflects this. Although not listed the appeal property and farm buildings form a group of buildings considered to be of local significance within the Forest South East Conservation Area Character Appraisal due to their
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historic and architectural interest and are thus classed as an undesignated heritage asset.

5. The locality is one of established character which is fairly set out in the Pylewell Park Character Area (PPCA) description within the 2009 appraisal of the CA as cited by the Appellants. The appearance of the area is an extremely attractive one of large and small dwellings; gardens, parkland and open land; and an architectural vernacular based around Pylewell Park which is distinctive and aesthetically pleasing. As the Appellants' Heritage Statement notes the appeal property is one of the more prestigious, albeit somewhat hidden, examples of the Pylewell estate architecture and makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the CA. Where more modern buildings have been constructed locally the PPCA notes that they blend in reasonably well with the more historic elements of the character area.
6. The Appellants have sought to create additional floorspace and link the two nineteenth century buildings by a contemporary form of architecture. This can be an entirely valid approach not least because it can prevent the blurring of distinction between old and new and allow historic buildings to continue to display their architectural qualities and/or historic interest to the full. However it is generally important to ensure that the new building work itself does not overly distract from or dominate the host structure(s) or otherwise be ill-at-ease in its setting.
7. Unfortunately by reason of its excessive height, degree of projecting footprint, relatively discordant envelope shape, uncharacteristic roof form, awkward abutments, and the considerable visual weight of the timbers, the planned extension would be seen as too strident a structure. It would also specifically visually detract from the adjoining built details such as the fine windows. Importantly, the scheme would appreciably diminish the sense of separation and hierarchy between the farm house and the ancillary outbuilding and would read as significant living accommodation in its own right. Furthermore the development would overly infringe upon the visually serene and characterful courtyard.
8. The proposal would not sit comfortably alongside the house or the outbuilding and immediate environs in character or appearance terms and would be out of sync with the attributes of the CA's character. The fact that a development is not on wide public view is not reason to set aside aesthetic consideration at any time but particularly so when dealing with heritage assets.
9. I would agree with the Appellants that the removal of the existing conservatory would be positive in character and appearance terms. However there are other circumstances which could lead to this and I am not persuaded this benefit outweighs the demerits of the appeal scheme.
10. Policies DP1, CP8 and DP6 of the CS are relevant. Taken together and amongst other matters they seek well designed sympathetic extensions which enhance local character and distinctiveness, are appropriate in scale and form, respect the built environment, and would not lead to erosion of the Park's local character. The objectives of the Authority's Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document mirror these aspects albeit the guidance cannot be expected to cover every eventuality. I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the cited development plan policies and purposes of the guidance. It would also run contrary to the aims of S72(1) of the Act and CS Policy CP7

because there would not be preservation or enhancement of the character of the CA.

*Other matters*

11. I sympathise with the Appellants' wish to increase habitable accommodation, create a link between buildings, erect an energy efficient structure, and provide scope to enjoy outlook. I hope that these aims can be satisfactorily resolved in dialogue with the Authority. I can see that considerable thought has gone into the design process to create an innovative and interesting structure albeit I disagree with its suitability in this instance. I recognise that the Appellants have undertaken some amendments to plans in the light of pre-application advice. I can understand the rationale for the selection of materials and the background concepts such as shipwright traditions. I appreciate that there would be a degree of 'permitted development' which could be undertaken in respect of this home. However I am not persuaded that this forms a compelling comparable fall-back to, or should over-ride findings on, the scheme before me which stems from a planning application and therefore needs requisite aesthetic assessment.
12. I have considered the example drawn to my attention from elsewhere (NFNPA ref 15/00998) but did not find it to be directly comparable by reason of location, size, siting, degree of subservience, and design generally. In any event I must assess the case before me on its own merits.
13. I have carefully considered all the points raised by the Appellants but these matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to the main issue identified above.
14. I confirm that policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) have been considered. Key objectives of the Framework are to protect and enhance the qualities of the natural and built environment as well as to safeguard heritage assets; development plan policies which I cite mirror these. The Framework underlines that great weight should be given to a heritage asset's conservation. The appeal proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset however what public benefits there would be would not outweigh this harm. Furthermore there are no other benefits, including to the Appellants, which to my mind would be of a scale to outweigh the harm to the Conservation Area which I have identified. Similarly the Framework's approach to non-designated heritage assets is pertinent and in my assessment the scale of the harm would not be outweighed by the public or private benefits.

*Overall conclusion*

15. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would have unacceptable adverse effects on the character or appearance of the host property and the locality. Accordingly the appeal is dismissed.

*D Cramond*

INSPECTOR