



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 November 2008

by Roger Mather MA Dip Arch RIBA FRTPI

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

The Planning Inspectorate
4/11 Eagle Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6PN

☎ 0117 372 6372
email: enquiries@pins.gsi.gov.uk

Decision date:
17 November 2008

Appeal A-Ref: APP/R3325/A/08/2083000

West Knole House, Knole, Long Sutton, Langport, Somerset TA10 9HY

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- Ms S Hayes brings the appeal against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
- The application (Ref: 08/01616/FUL) dated 28 March 2008, was refused by notice dated 3 July 2008.
- The development proposed is conversion works to form annexe accommodation/garage.

Appeal B-Ref: APP/R3325/E/08/2083019

West Knole House, Knole, Long Sutton, Langport, Somerset TA10 9HY

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991, against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
- Ms S Hayes brings the appeal against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
- The application (Ref: 08/01617/LBC) dated 28 March 2008, was refused by notice dated 3 July 2008.
- The works proposed are conversion works to form annexe accommodation/garage.

Decisions

Appeal A-Ref: APP/R3325/A/08/2083000

1. I dismiss the appeal.

Appeal B-Ref: APP/R3325/E/08/2083019

2. I dismiss the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The outbuilding is one of a number of buildings within the curtilage of West Knole House, which is listed in grade II. It lies within the Knole Conservation Area. The building was to be extended for use as a triple carport and double garage as part of a wider conversion scheme for holiday-let accommodation (Refs: 07/04938/FUL & 07/04939/LBC). Following discussions with the Council, the appellant would not implement the permitted works for this particular outbuilding but would instead convert it for annexe accommodation while extending the open log store to provide a double garage.
4. From this, the representations and my inspection of the site and surrounding area, the main issue common to both appeals is whether the proposed works would satisfactorily preserve the setting of West Knole House, having regard in

S.SOM.DC
18 NOV 2008
RESOLUTION CENTRE

this instance also to its contribution to the character and appearance of the Knole Conservation Area within which it lies.

Reasons for Decisions

5. The original outbuilding has previously been altered. Among other things, a replacement corrugated iron roof and domestic windows have been added, unsympathetic to its original state, based on a traditional stone barn. Nevertheless, this curtilage listed structure is part of a group of barns visually associated with West Knole House and what might be appropriate in terms of the principle of converting the building for ancillary residential use ought not to be assumed to be appropriate in assessing works that would alter its character, in the setting of the principal building, to achieve that end.
6. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as amended, states that in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works, special regard shall be paid to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of architectural or historic interest, which it possesses. Section 72(1) of the Act states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. Development plan policies reflect the thrust of the statutory requirement and the planning application (appeal A) must be determined in accordance with those policies, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. I ascribe substantial weight to Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15), which represents well-established Government policy on the historic environment.
7. The outbuilding the subject of these appeals is of no architectural merit but I am concerned that extending one end would be a visually obvious addition that would introduce an incongruous massing, which would damage the simplicity and modest nature of this simple curtilage listed structure. The additional bulk at roof level is unprecedented in this context and would disrupt the pleasing unbroken simple form of the outbuilding and so harm the important visual gap between the two southern barns and the principal building such as to harm its setting. The architectural composition and simple geometry would be lost. Moreover, it would not be a sensitive handling of the scale or detail, or preserve the simple roof shape, contrary to Government guidance in paragraph C.27 of PPG15, which states that the roof is nearly always a dominant feature of a building and the retention of its original shape is important.
8. I dispute neither the principle of using the building for ancillary accommodation nor the desirability of rejuvenating it but I have found a compelling objection to the enlargement of the log store and the consequent harm to the character of the curtilage listed structure and setting of the principal building. That would dilute its contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. To permit the works in these circumstances would be to disregard the historic interest that led to the listing of West Knole House and the designation of the Conservation Area as well as the duties imposed by the Act and guidance in PPG15. The planning application (appeal A) would conflict with Policies EH1 and EH3 of the South Somerset Local Plan that was adopted in 2006.

S.SOM.DC
18 NOV 2008
RESOLUTION CENTRE

9. In reaching these decisions, I have considered all of the other matters brought to my attention, including the argument that the outbuilding and yard are designated for parking and thus its ancillary residential use would lead to overdevelopment, as well as the appellants observations on the listing description. As I saw, there is ample space for additional parking to supplement the proposed double garage without giving rise to unacceptable consequences in terms of overdevelopment. The existing outbuilding does not form part of the listing description but, as paragraph 6.19 of PPG15 indicates, the listing description is principally to aid identification, not intended to provide a comprehensive or exclusive record of all the features of importance.
10. I have also taken into account the fallback situation. The building can lawfully be used for ancillary residential accommodation and the effect of these decisions would be to prevent the works to the open log store. However, for the reasons given above, those works are unacceptable. As such, neither these considerations nor any other matter raised is of such significance as to outweigh the considerations that led to my conclusions on the main issue. Consequently, I further conclude that these appeals should not succeed.

Roger Mather
INSPECTOR

S.SOM.DC
18 NOV 2008
RESOLUTION CENTRE