



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 December 2009

by **Nicholas Hammans** FRSA FRTPI
FRGS PPBEng

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

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Decision date:
5 January 2010

Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/A/09/2113774

Rushley Cottage, Standhill Road, High Ham, Langport, Somerset TA10 9DG.

- 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 Alan Pursey against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
- The application Ref 09/02403/FUL, dated 23 June 2009, was refused by notice dated 26 August 2009.
- The development proposed is a single storey extension to a dwelling.

Decision

1. I allow the appeal, and grant planning permission for a single storey extension to a dwelling at Rushley Cottage, Standhill Road, High Ham, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 09/02403/FUL, dated 26 June 2009 and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) No development shall take place until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: PHH PL-01; -02A; -03A; -04A; -05 and -06 and SK-05 dated 17.09.09.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the design and appearance of the proposed extension and its effect on the character of the existing dwelling.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a roadside cottage in unspoilt rural surroundings. The South Somerset Local Plan, adopted in 2006, relates to this attractive countryside and the importance of design in new development. This is consistent with government objectives. Although the dwelling is somewhat remote, there is no strategic objection to a one-room extension to the existing dwelling in terms of Local Plan Policy ST5. Local Plan Policy ST6 sets out criteria of design, which require key characteristics of the location to be preserved, and its architecture to respect the existing form of development.

4. The cottage is of two storeys. The original building has been extended in the past; but it is still modest in scale and vernacular in character. It stands at an angle to Standhill Road, so that its appearance from the north presents a long catslide roof of clay tiles over a simple ground-floor of local lias stone; and from the south it presents a rendered elevation with stained PVC windows and a front door. The other elevation is angled away from the lane, although it can be seen from the highway. It overlooks a side garden. This is a two-storey façade of stonework and clay tiles.
5. In the light of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order as amended in 2008, the Council has informally adopted a stance whereby their definition of the main elevation of a building deliberately avoids any reference to its relationship to the highway; and in those terms the elevation angled away from the lane would be the main elevation. The appellant has responded with a diagram showing how an alternative design could be built as permitted development; but neither of the principal parties rely on that as a fall-back option. My decision in this appeal is based simply on the merits of the submitted design.
6. The proposed one-room extension is of single storey. It would provide a living room for the existing dwelling. This would be set forward of the existing two-storey façade; almost free-standing, though linked to the existing cottage by a small hall/lobby. The extension would be prominent from the highway, but clearly subordinate to the building as a whole. A plinth of local stone would match the adjacent façade, with render to match the south elevation, and clay-tiled roofing at an appropriate pitch. A large chimney-breast and stack would feature in the wall facing the garden. The overall height of the stack is reduced in the submitted drawing SK-05. The small flat-roofed lobby would be recessed. All in all, I conclude that the proposed design is complementary to the existing cottage.
7. the proposed development would not therefore conflict with the objectives of the Development Plan. I have imposed conditions to require matching materials and to facilitate any necessary minor material amendments. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Nicholas Hammans

Inspector