



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 January 2008

by **Jill C Kingaby** BSc(Econ) MSc MRTPI

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

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Decision date:
13 February 2008

Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/A/07/2057230

Home Farmhouse, Sticklepath, Combe St Nicholas TA20 3HL

- 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 M Pearce against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
- The application Ref 07/03087/FUL, dated 27 6 07, was refused by notice dated 9 8 07.
- The development proposed is conversion of existing building with extension, for use as annexe to Home Farmhouse.

Decision

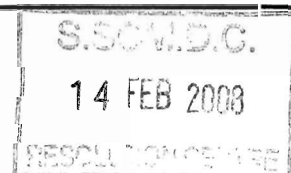
1. I dismiss the appeal.

Main issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is whether the proposal by virtue of its size, scale, design and position would provide an annexe to the main farmhouse which would not be tantamount to the creation of a new dwelling in the countryside.

Reasons

3. The development plan for the area includes saved policies from the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review 2000. Policies STR1 and STR6 require development in the countryside outside rural centres and villages to be strictly controlled so that, among other things, the pattern of land use will minimise the length of journeys and not foster growth in the need for travel. Policy ST3 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006 reinforces this approach. The appeal site is located in the countryside outside any settlement boundary, where the provision of an independent dwellinghouse would conflict with these policies.
4. An earlier application for an annexe was refused on appeal in March 2007 (APP/R3325/A/06/2032395) and the Inspector commented that a lesser scheme with a smaller extension could be more visually acceptable than the scheme before him. It could also have reduced his concerns that there could be pressure in the longer term for occupation as an independent residential unit. I have taken account of that decision and the fact that the current proposal includes a smaller extension (reduced by some 12 sqm) and would maintain the existing form of the stone outbuilding. However, the plans show



the addition of a number of new openings, and alterations to the roof with a gable, which together with the extension would give the building a clearly domestic appearance. In my view, its current character and interest as part of the old farm would be reduced, contrary to Policy ST5(4) of the Local Plan.

5. The outbuilding is detached from the main house. The plans show an internal layout with a sizeable kitchen and dining area as well as a bedroom, lounge and bathroom, which leads me to the view that it could be occupied separately from the existing house. Whilst a planning condition could be attached to tie use of the proposal to the main dwelling, Circular 11/95: The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions, paragraphs 98 and 99, caution that annexes, particularly in separate buildings, could subsequently be let or sold off separately. Whilst the Appellants might use the accommodation as an annexe, it could be difficult for the Council to maintain that situation and enforce a planning condition in the longer term. I consider that the proposal does not overcome sufficiently the concerns raised by the first Inspector. I conclude that the proposal by virtue of its size, scale, design and position could lead in the long term to the creation of a new dwelling in the countryside contrary to local planning policies. The appeal therefore fails.

Jill Kingaby

INSPECTOR