

Planning Advisory Group Comments, March 2021

Vine Cottage - Application 20/04079 - 20/04080/LBA - Revised Proposal

(Previous proposal and comments shown below in blue)

Key Changes

- The length of wall to be removed has been reduced from approximately 5m to 1m.
- A revised garage door design has been proposed.

Comments

- The significantly reduced length of wall proposed for removal is more acceptable.
- The revised garage door design is a marked improvement and addresses our previous concerns.

Recommendation

To add a comment that we no longer object and leave the matter for the determination of the planning officer.

Previous proposal and comments: Demolition of existing stone wall. Replacement with new stone wall to improve vehicular access and parking provision and change of garage door material from softwood to steel.

Key Points;

- Listed Building
- Within the conservation area
- The neighbouring property Rowan House had an application (16/03713/FUL) to remove a smaller section of wall approved at appeal.

A key objective of the adopted Freshford and Limpley Stoke Neighbourhood Development Plan is to protect the local Conservation Area. This is expanded on further within the Freshford and Sharpstone Conservation Area Character Appraisal, in which boundary rubble walls within the village are specifically highlighted as a feature of special interest. It states

"Protection of the boundary walls is a high priority and they should not be neglected. Traditional repairs with lime mortar should be encouraged. The removal of boundary walls to provide access or parking should be resisted."

In addition to the Conservation Area Appraisal, saved Local Plan policy BH.7 states that the total or substantial demolition of structures which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area should not be permitted, unless the proposed development would make a significantly greater contribution to the Conservation Area.

Although this is a similar application to the one next door, there are two key differences. Firstly, Vine Cottage already has parking spaces, whereas Rowan House did not. Secondly, this application seeks permission to demolish 5 meters of wall whereas the Rowan House application was for 2.5 meters.

Part of the application refers also to a proposal to replace the wooden doors of the garage with a single metal roll over door. We don't believe this is a suitable or acceptable alternative to what already exists.

Recommendation :

Object

The application fails to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area. Any degree of public benefit does not outweigh the visual harm to the Conservation Area.

The Cottage - 21/00431/FUL

Planning Constraints

Agric Land Class 1,2,3a, Housing Development Boundary, LLFA - Flood Risk Management, MOD Safeguarded Areas, Policy CP8 Green Belt, Policy CP9 Affordable Housing Zones, Policy NE1 Green Infrastructure Network, Policy NE2 AONB, Policy NE5 Ecological Networks, Policy NE5 Strategic Nature Areas, SSSI - Impact Risk Zones

Key Points

- The property has an extensive planning history and has been extended a number of times in the past. The property already appears to have been extended well beyond the one third of the original building that the Green Belt SPD provides as guidance for what is more likely to be acceptable.
- Essentially it appears the removal of some existing outbuildings resulting in a reduction of volume and impact of the overall site on the openness of the Green Belt is being offered to help justify another extension. In addition, the fact the proposed extension is set into the bank, so at least some of its volume would be below ground level might also be taken into consideration.

Comments

The proposed removal of other outbuildings and the fact the extension would cut into the bank mean whether the proposal would result in a disproportionate impact on the openness of the Green Belt is debatable. However, the position, design, and number of extensions already added has led to original building becoming subservient to its extensions, and the proposed extension would only serve to further compound this issue.

Recommendation : Object

- The original building appears to have already been extended well beyond the one third of the original building that the Green Belt SPD provides as guidance for what is "more likely to be acceptable". Therefore, we believe the proposed extension represents further disproportionate development in the Green Belt.
- The proposed extension lacks sufficient design merit to justify another addition to this property. When combined with the number of previous additions, there is a danger the original building will become entirely subservient to its extensions. We do not therefore consider the proposal to improve the physical qualities of the built environment as required by the Villages Design Rationale set out in our Neighbourhood Plan.