

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Local Planning Authority Statement of Case

**APPEAL RELATING TO LLANERCH COTTAGE,
FRONCYSYLLTE, WREXHAM.**

PINS Refs: APP/H6955/A/17/3178694
LPA Planning Refs: P/2016/1012

THE COUNCIL'S CASE

This application was refused by Wrexham CBC Planning Committee on 6th March 2017 for the following reason

The proposed extension by virtue of its size and massing has a detrimental impact upon the character of the original property and the wider setting of the World Heritage Site contrary to Policies GDP1 and EC5 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.

The site lies within an elevated position in a highly sensitive location in open countryside. The visual significance of the area is reflected by the number of designations affording the site protection. It is a designated Green Barrier, a Special Landscape Area, part of the AONB and within the buffer zone of the World heritage Site.

The proposal involves a substantial double side extension to the existing dwelling which is a modest upland welsh cottage with a rendered finish. The cottage is built into the hillside outwardly facing the valley with the road providing access lying behind it. An illustration of the front elevation is shown below.



EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION

A previous permission was granted in 2008 for a large extension which has been implemented. The approved front elevation is shown below. This was a large extension and provided more than the additional space considered essential to meet modern standards. Not only did it result in a considerable increase in volume but it extended the width of the building from approximately 16 metres to nearly 30 metres.

The impact of this increase in width was to some extent off-set by varying roof heights, simple elevational treatment with single storey elements on either side of the extended building. Nevertheless it was a very large extension and one which arguably would not be supported today, given the change in circumstances (AONB & World Heritage Site) as well as a greater emphasis upon design promoted through TAN 12.



PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION

The current application is for an extension based on the same floor print as the approved permission. There however some key differences which add to its mass and make a significant impact upon the overall appearance of the development.

Firstly, the introduction of a large basement element. This addition increases the mass of the building set against the hillside would create the appearance of a three storey dwelling from wider views of the site.

Secondly increasing the height of the single storey elements on either end of the building increase the scale and mass even further. It also serves to elongate the building by creating a constant ridge height.

The introduction of three more windows at first floor level only serve to elongate the building's overall linear form. These changes over and above the approved scheme increase the scale and mass of the original dwelling to an unacceptable level which will be discussed in more detail below. Proposed front elevation illustrated below.



It is acknowledged that extensions to dwellings in the countryside will be permitted in appropriate cases. Detailed advice is given in Local Planning Guidance Note 13 Housing in the Countryside. Appendix 1

However because of their potential visual impact the scale of dwelling extensions in the countryside particularly within an AONB and Special Landscape area will be an especially significant consideration. The adopted guidance which has been the subject of public consultation states that extensions must be clearly subsidiary to the original dwelling and should not result in an increase in more than a third in the floor area of the original dwelling.

This extension would not be subsidiary and would amount to an increase of over 150%. Whilst it could be argued that the previous permission has already breached the guidance, the overall design and proportions with varying roof heights helped to reduce the overall visual impact.

The Council consider that the previous permission was the absolute upper limit of volume in terms of extending the building. There basically becomes a point of where enough is enough. The previous decision was also made prior to the designations of AONB and World Heritage Site which have since recognised the sensitivity and importance of the landscape. Decision making within these areas is aimed at landscape protection and enhancement. To allow extensions of this scale and potential impact within sensitive locations would undermine these objectives and establish an undesirable precedent in resisting similar proposals elsewhere.

The guidance also states that extensions resulting in an increase of more than one third in the floor area will only be appropriate in the case of small dwellings where additional space is essential to meet modern standards, or where a higher quality of design more in keeping with the character of the original dwelling could be achieved.

The council contend that the dwelling can be extended sympathetically to provide additional space to meet modern standards without having to extend to the scale proposed. In addition the Council maintain that the proposed extension does not provide a higher quality design and certainly not one which is in keeping with the original dwelling. The original dwelling is entirely lost within the proposed scheme.

Although the approved extension has not been built the guidance also states the successive extensions to the same dwelling may not be permitted where there cumulative impact would destroy the character and appearance of the original building. Whilst the extant permission has not been fully implemented, this proposal is in principle a successive attempt to extend the approved scheme even further.

Policy EC5 (Special Landscape Areas) indicates that within these areas development will be required to conform to a high standard of design and landscaping, and special attention will be paid to minimising its visual impact from both nearby and distant viewpoints. The same principles apply within the AONB and buffer zone of the World Heritage Site.

The visual impact is significant and apart from the size and scale of the extensions over-dominating the existing dwelling (a point also made within LPG 20 House extensions) other than family needs which is not a material planning consideration no planning justification has been proved to accept this proposal.

In addition the opportunities to mitigate the visual impact of the development are limited or non-existent. Given the site's position the applicants would also want to maintain an open aspect and the extensions understandably have been designed to take full advantages of the views. The opportunities for screening are therefore limited. There are mature trees beyond the site boundary to the front which help partially screen views from outside the site, but in winter months this would not be so effective, and they could at some stage in future be removed fully exposing the site.

In summary the width of the proposed development at a full two storey height, with an additional basement will form a highly conspicuous development at this exposed location. The proposal does not meet any of the requirements relating to house extensions as set out in LPG 13 and the proposed extensions completely dominate the original dwelling. Opportunities to mitigate the visual impact are limited. To allow a development of the scale and proportions proposed within such a sensitive landscape would be contrary to the objectives of protecting the Special Landscape Area, AONB and the World Heritage Site from inappropriate development.

The Council is aware that the appellant was not sent a determined copy of his submitted plan showing the front elevation of the proposed extension subject to this appeal. This is hereby attached at Appendix 1 for the benefit of the Inspector. A copy has also been forwarded on to the appellant's agent.

For the above reasons the Council respectfully request this appeal is dismissed.

SUGGESTED CONDITIONS

Should the Inspector be minded to allow either appeal, the Council respectfully requests that consideration be given to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiry of five years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91(3) of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990.

2. The development shall only be carried out in strict accordance with the details shown on the approved drawing(s) numbered
PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION 2,
PROPOSED BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN 2
PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN 2
PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN 3
PROPOSED LEFT ELEVATION 2

PROPOSED RIGHT ELEVATION 2
PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION 2
PROPOSED SECTIONS AA,BB AND CC 2 and
PROPOSED SECTION II

and contained within the application documentation.

Reason: To define the scope of the planning permission.

3. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking, re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no further development shall take place under Classes A, B, C, D or E of Schedule 2 Part 1, other than the development hereby granted permission.

Reason: Due to the restricted application site it is considered important to ensure that no additional development as described in the condition is carried out without the permission of the Local Planning Authority.

3. No development shall commence until a scheme of boundary treatments, to include timescales for their implementation, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the details as may be approved.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory standard of appearance of the development in the interests of the visual amenities of the area.

Appendix 1

Refused elevation plan