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## Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 15 October 2019

by **Nick Fagan BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

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

Decision date: 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019

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### **Appeal Ref: APP/C1760/W/19/3232988**

#### **Warblers Cottage, Chapel Lane, Timsbury, Romsey, Hampshire SO51 0NW**

- 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 Roger and Mary Savage against the decision of Test Valley Borough Council.
  - The application Ref 19/00301/FULLS, dated 8 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 18 April 2019.
  - The development proposed is erection of a two-storey rear extension and associated works.
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### **Appeal Ref: APP/C1760/Y/19/3232984**

#### **Warblers Cottage, Chapel Lane, Timsbury, Romsey, Hampshire SO51 0NW**

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
  - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Roger and Mary Savage against the decision of Test Valley Borough Council.
  - The application Ref 19/00302/LBWS, dated 8 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 18 April 2019.
  - The works proposed are erection of a two-storey rear extension and associated works.
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### **Decisions**

1. Both appeals are dismissed.

### **Main Issue**

2. The main issue is whether the proposed extension would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed cottage.

### **Reasons**

3. Warblers Cottage is a two-storey 17<sup>th</sup> century timber-framed, thatch-roofed dwelling with a single-storey side extension to its eastern side built in the 1940s also with a thatched roof. It is a good example of a narrow span linear form thatched cottage of modest proportions typical of this rural part of Hampshire. Set back from the cottage on the plot's western boundary is a more recent timber-faced two-storey detached garage building with residential accommodation on the first floor.
4. The main part of the proposed extension would be behind the rear wall of the 1940s extension, parallel with and approximately the same depth as the detached garage. It would be attached to this extension only by a narrow mainly glazed link, such that it would resemble a free-standing barn especially

- given its elevations would be clad in horizontal timber weatherboarding and its roof in plain clay tiles.
5. However, it would be considerably wider than the span of the cottage and the width of the detached garage. Half its width would project beyond the eastern gable of the listed building and it would be clearly visible when looking at the front of the cottage. It would be prominent from Chapel Lane to the east because of its depth, scale and bulk when viewed next to the gable elevation of the cottage and the existing extension.
  6. As such it would not be either physically or visually subsidiary to the listed cottage. Whilst it would be located to the rear it would still dominate the proportions and plan form of the existing vernacular cottage, which originally was more than likely occupied by an agricultural worker in the vicinity.
  7. There is no evidence that this modest cottage was part of a larger farmstead and the presence of such a large extension resembling a barn therefore has no historic precedent. Although well designed in itself and of an acceptable height, such a large extension would unacceptably dominate the modest proportions and plan form of the listed cottage and hence harm its significance as a listed building; it would simply be too big. This harm would be 'less than substantial' in terms of paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
  8. Such harm is required to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing the listed building's optimum viable use. The cottage has always been a dwelling and its residential accommodation has been increased by the availability of the first floor of the detached garage, albeit this building is detached from the house and so its usefulness in practice may be limited. The original cottage has already been extended to create a total of three habitable rooms on the ground floor and there are two bedrooms and a bathroom on the first floor, enough habitable space to make it a viable dwelling.
  9. I understand the appellants' desire to create a larger kitchen/dining room and larger bedroom. But that cannot be at the cost of compromising the significance of the listed building itself and it cannot be said to be necessary to secure the optimum residential use of the cottage, which has existed as such for over three hundred years. The economic benefits of construction identified by the appellants would be so minor as to be inconsequential and the biodiversity enhancements could be achieved without building the extension. Consequently, I am not persuaded that there would be any significant public benefits arising from the proposal. Even if I was to accept that the proposal would make the dwelling more viable as a family house, any such benefits would fail to outweigh the harm to the listed building.
  10. I am required by statute to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.<sup>1</sup> NPPF paragraph 184 states that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Paragraph 193 states that great weight should be given to assets' conservation even if there is only 'less than substantial' harm, and paragraph 194 states that any harm requires clear and convincing justification. Policy E9 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) requires

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<sup>1</sup> S16(2) & S66(1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

development affecting a heritage asset to sustain or enhance the asset's significance, taking account of its character, appearance and setting. For the above reasons the proposal would fail to comply with these requirements.

11. I acknowledge that there are six letters of support to the proposal from near neighbours and that no objection was raised by the Parish Council. However, these comments do not gainsay the clear harm to the significance of the listed cottage.
12. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeals should be dismissed.

*Nick Fagan*

INSPECTOR