

18 DCSE2004/3323/F - PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF EXISTING HOUSE. ERECTION OF NEW 3 BEDROOM DWELLING AND ASSOCIATED GARDEN PAVILION AT "UP BEYOND", WYE VIEW LANE, SYMONDS YAT, ROSS-ON-WYE, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR9 6BN

For: Mr. & Mrs. R. Harvey per Metropolis Architecture Ltd, Studio G, 27 High Street, Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Warwickshire, CV8 3EY

Date Received: 24th September, 2004 Ward: Kerne Bridge Grid Ref: 55703, 16076

Expiry Date: 19th November, 2004

Local Member: Councillor Mrs. R.F. Lincoln

1. Site Description and Proposal

1.1 The west side of the Wye Gorge at Symonds Yat West is characterised by a series of lanes which cut diagonally upwards from the main highway. The application site is accessed off Wye View Lane which is towards the southern end of Symonds Yat West. Up Beyond is a detached, white painted house with hipped roof, significantly higher than the lane and with a sheer cliff face close to the rear of the house.

1.2 It is proposed to erect a replacement dwelling. This would be of modern design with most of the living accommodation at ground floor level. This, together with the smaller first floor level (master bedroom and roof terrace) would be timber cladding with floor to ceiling non-reflective glass and a curved copper roof. The basement below the southern section of the house would be of local dry stone walling but held within gabion cages. This would accommodate garaging and storage and utility/w.c. The new house would be set further back within the site, close to the rock face, and with the basement finished floor level below that of the existing house. Nevertheless the roof would be about 1 m higher than the ridge of the existing dwelling. A number of terraces are proposed to the side of the house and on part of the roof of the ground floor section.

2. Policies

2.1 Planning Policy Guidance

PPS7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

2.2 Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan

Policy CTC1 - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Policy CTC2 - Area of Great Landscape Value
Policy H20 - Residential Development in Open Countryside

2.3 South Herefordshire District Local Plan

Policy C4 - AONB Landscape Protection

Policy C5	-	Development within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Policy C8	-	Development Within Area of Great Landscape Value
Policy SH21	-	Replacement Dwellings
Policy GD1	-	General Development Criteria

3. Planning History

3.1 There have not been any recent applications relating to this property.

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

4.1 Environment Agency has no objections in principle but recommends that a condition be imposed regarding drainage.

4.2 Forestry Commission state that as no woodland is affected they have no comments to make on the proposal.

4.3 English Nature has not yet responded.

Internal Council Advice

4.4 Traffic Manager has no objections to the proposal.

4.5 Conservation Manager has no objections to the proposal.

5. Representations

5.1 The applicant's agent has not submitted a letter of application but notes attached to the drawing give the following explanation:

(1) The proposed house is located behind the existing house to make use of the existing levels, blend the house within it's landscape, maximise the views and daylight to the east and provide as much amenity space away from the rock face.

(2) The existing turning area could be enlarged, but it is proposed to place a new turning area near to the garage/entrance area.

(3) The only tree affected by the proposal is a single conifer.

(4) It is proposed to collect all the rainwater in an external wild life pond which in turn feeds a grey water re-cycling tank located under the building.

(5) The building is designed to be an ecological structure, growing out of the site and blending within the setting.

(6) The structure will be a locally sourced timber structure with individual foundation bases allowing a minimal footprint on the site. The floor structures will float above the existing site levels.

5.2 The Parish Council states that Councillors are unanimous in their objection to this application, which is totally out of keeping with the surrounding area. Furthermore, it is

not on the site of the existing house, but much further back, and larger. Such a radical proposal warrants a Committee decision.

5.3 Three letters have been received expressing objections or concern. In summary the following points are made:

- (1) the primary concern is that there is very poor access to the site via Wye View Lane which is very narrow (at points only 2-5 m wide) poorly maintained and with an impossibly sharp turn at the access to Up Beyond,
- (2) large vehicles have great difficulty using the lane and adjoining properties have been damaged and the lane so severely damaged that it has been closed causing much nuisance and disruption,
- (3) consequently extremely difficult, if not impossible for delivery vehicles to bring materials including large modular sections and plant to the site,
- (4) also alarmed that house to be demolished with all the rubble/fittings having to be removed,
- (5) Ross on Wye District and Civic Society have no objection to the design but have strong reservation about using copper for the roof and cladding the staircase - views across the Wye Gorge are of particular importance and colour of oxidised copper will not blend well particularly in winter,
- (6) holding tank for water way overflow/burst resulting in flooding of properties below,
- (7) boundary line to the property could be incorrect

The full text of these letters can be inspected at Southern Planning Services, Blueschool House, Blueschool Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

6. Officers Appraisal

6.1 The main issue is considered to be whether the proposed dwelling because of its size, position and design would harm the natural beauty of the Wye Valley AONB. The existing house is about half way up the steep valley side and from public views, albeit from some distance, stands out from the surrounding trees. Up Beyond can also be seen from Wye Valley Lane and public footpaths. Comparison in terms of size with the proposed house is not straight forward as they are very different buildings. The footprint of the new house is larger than the existing but the upper floor of the former is significantly smaller. Thus although slightly higher the reduced size of the upper floor would be less prominent in the landscape. The two houses therefore have similar floor areas. However the new house would have an additional storey below the ground floor. This would primarily be for garaging and would be below the ground floor level of the existing house and would not be seen from public viewpoints. The existing house does not have a garage. It seems reasonable therefore in comparing the size of the two houses to conclude that they would comply with Policy SH21 which requires that they be of similar size.

6.2 Setting the house further back on the site and the use of non-reflective glass would further help to reduce the visual impact of the proposed house. The roof although less

noticeable than the roof of the existing house could stand out unless carefully considered but the materials can be controlled by planning condition. It is considered then that the house would not be as prominent or obtrusive in this sensitive landscape, despite being larger, than the existing white painted building.

- 6.3 The house is of modern design. Symonds Yat West is characterised by houses of very varied materials (wood, stone and brick) and styles. Adding to this variety a house of interesting yet contemporary design would not harm the natural beauty of the landscape. It would be well separated from existing houses and not therefore appear incongruous amongst dissimilar buildings.
- 6.4 Of the other issues raised in the representations the problems of demolishing Up Beyond, removing the materials and delivering new materials are appreciated. However these are matters for the developer to solve rather than grounds for refusing planning permission.

RECOMMENDATION

That subject to there being no objection to the revised plans by the end of the consultation period, the officers named in the Scheme of Delegation to Officers be authorised to approve the application subject to the following conditions and further conditions considered necessary by officers:

1 A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission))

Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2 B01 (Samples of external materials)

Reason: To ensure that the materials harmonise with the surroundings.

3 G04 (Landscaping scheme (general))

Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.

4 G05 (Implementation of landscaping scheme (general))

Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.

5 E16 (Removal of permitted development rights)

Reason: [Special Reason].

6 F48 (Details of slab levels)

Reason: In order to define the permission and ensure that the development is of a scale and height appropriate to the site.

7 F18 (Scheme of foul drainage disposal)

Reason: In order to ensure that satisfactory drainage arrangements are provided.

8 H12 (Parking and turning - single house)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure the free flow of traffic using the adjoining highway.

Informative(s):

1 N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of Planning Permission

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.