



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 August 2016

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

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

Decision date: 11 October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/A1720/W/16/3147131

Carron Row Farm, 15 Segensworth Road, Titchfield, Fareham, Hampshire, PO15 5DZ.

- 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 Steve and Jo Hammond against the decision of Fareham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P/15/0267/FP, dated 19 March 2015, was refused by notice dated 28 January 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as change of use listed barn to 5 bedroom dwelling, formation of access and garden curtilage, demolition of single storey building, erection of garage, demolition of the toilet block, demolition of the single storey Fishermans' [sic] hut and replacement with 3 bedroom dwelling, formation of access and garden curtilage for new dwelling, formation of car parking for anglers, new storage building, erection of heritage interpretation sign.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue to be the effect of the proposed development on the character or appearance of the conservation area, its effect on the setting of the listed building and scheduled ancient monument and whether it would result in an undesirable new dwelling in the countryside.

Reasons

3. The property the subject of this appeal comprises a rectangular piece of land accessed from a long drive, being a public right of way, off Segensworth Road. It is located in the Titchfield Abbey Conservation Area.
4. The site, which falls from west to east, comprises a Grade II listed barn adjacent to the drive. Immediately to the east of the barn is a brick building with a tiled roof used for dog day care and grooming. To the north of the barn is a small toilet building located next to the site of the adjacent model railway. Along the eastern boundary is a single storey brick building with a corrugated metal roof used by the fishermen who fish the fishponds, which are part of the Titchfield Abbey Scheduled Monument, and associated parking to the south of the appeal site.

5. The appellants propose the conversion and change of use of the barn to a dwelling, and the erection of a new dwelling. The new dwelling would be an 'L' shaped single storey structure, with one bedroom in the roof space, designed in a vernacular style to reflect the character and appearance of the listed barn. Following the removal of the existing small toilet, dog day care building and fisherman's hut, the site would be landscaped to provide vehicular access, parking and garden areas. To the south of the barn, the parking areas for the fishponds would be reordered and landscaped to relocate vehicle parking away from them.
6. The Council raises no objection to the conversion and change of use of the barn and has already granted listed building consent, (Ref: P/15/0268/LB) on the 28 January 2016 for the proposed works. From what I have seen and read and as there are no other viable alternative uses for the barn I find no reason to form a contrary view.
7. It is agreed between the parties that the site lies in the countryside outside of the defined urban settlement boundaries. Policy CS14 of the Fareham Borough Local Development Framework-Core Strategy (Local Plan Part 1) (Adopted August 2011) (CS) and DSP6 of the Fareham Borough Development Sites and Policies Plan (Local Plan Part 2) (Adopted June 2015) (DS and PP) address the issues of development and more particularly, in the case of DS and PP Policy DSP6, new residential development outside of the defined urban settlement boundaries.
8. CS Policy CS14 seeks to strictly control built development on land outside the defined settlements, as in this case, to protect the countryside from development that would affect its landscape character, appearance and function. DS and PP Policy DSP6 states there will be a presumption against new residential development outside the defined urban settlement boundaries. Although a number of exceptions are listed where new houses will be permitted, these are not applicable in this case.
9. Accordingly, being an unacceptable form of development in this countryside location, the proposed construction of a new dwelling here would adversely affect the landscape character and appearance of the area, contrary to the development plan. However, Section 38(6) of the Act says that applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
10. The appellants have drawn my attention to the Local Plan Inspector's report in respect of the then emerging LP Policy DSP7, now adopted DS and PP Policy DSP6. In this respect I agree with the Council that the appellants have been somewhat selective in their interpretation of the Inspector's intention. To my mind, it is clear that the inclusion of the additional criteria relates specifically to the infilling of an existing and continuous residential frontage outside a settlement boundary. I therefore do not consider that the policy provides the mechanism for an additional dwelling here. Accordingly I give this consideration very limited weight.
11. The appellants argue that the removal of the three outbuildings and their replacement with one single discrete well designed and sited building would be more sympathetic to the character of the countryside. I agree that the removal

of the outbuildings proposed would be welcome in this location. However, I am not persuaded that the introduction of a new dwelling here, albeit having been designed to reflect the architectural form and style of the listed barn, with its necessary associated domestic paraphernalia, access, parking etc., would necessarily be more sympathetic to the location than say simply softening and greening the area once the existing buildings were removed. I therefore give this matter very limited weight

12. The heritage enhancements, set out in the appellants' evidence, are, I acknowledge, important considerations in terms of the heritage assets themselves. I also note, from the appellants' evidence, that the development of a new dwelling on this site would not be necessary to enable the conversion of the barn, listed Grade II, to be undertaken. Accordingly, these considerations are of only limited weight in the overall planning balance in respect of the need for a new dwelling here.
13. From the officer's report for committee I see that Historic England has advised that a new dwelling on the site of the fisherman's hut would, in its opinion, have a neutral impact on the setting of the scheduled ancient monument. The Council considers that the proposal as a whole would serve to preserve the setting of the listed building as well as the character and appearance of the conservation area. The proposal includes for the removal of unattractive and utilitarian buildings as well as incorporating new landscaping. Accordingly, given the subservient vernacular form and design of the new dwelling, I would not reach a contrary view on these matters. In addition, I understand that there are no outstanding concerns in respect of highways, residential amenity or ecology, including a financial contribution towards the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy. However, as all of these matters would need to be acceptable in any case if planning permission were to be granted, I do not consider that the fact they have been found apposite that these considerations amount to positive benefits of the scheme to outweigh the harm that I have identified.
14. Subject to the removal of the existing outbuildings, I appreciate the development of a new dwelling on this site may only result in an increased floor area of some 16.5 square metres or so. I also accept that Permitted Development rights for a dwelling in the strategic gap might well itself lead to more extensive additions than planned here with no requirement for planning permission. Whether or not that is the case, the current outbuildings are not in residential use and I do not consider that the development of a new dwelling here is therefore directly comparable.
15. I note that there may be some uncertainty in terms of the timing and delivery of the major development at Welborne. However, whilst I accept that this proposal would result in an additional dwelling, given the harm that would ensue to the character and appearance of the countryside, I do not consider that one additional dwelling here would impact in any meaningful way on housing land supply. I therefore give this consideration very limited weight.
16. The appellants have drawn my attention to DS and PP Policy DSP1 which addresses sustainable development. With regard to the presumption in favour of sustainable development the appellants argue that there should be a positive stance taken towards the proposal as, in their view, the benefits clearly

outweigh the harms. In this respect they contend that the three dimensions of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) should be taken into account.

17. The Framework at paragraph 7 identifies the three dimensions of sustainability as economic, social and environmental roles and at paragraph 8 it states that to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously. Although there may be some limited economic and social benefits pertaining to the proposal, I consider that it fails to fulfil an environmental role as it would not preserve and enhance the natural environment.
18. Further, the new dwelling might be of a low carbon design but such a development does not necessarily require a countryside location. In any case, based on the lack of evidence to the contrary, the physical construction of a new dwelling here and the likelihood of future occupants being dependant on the private car for access to services, work and amenities would, in itself, result in a significant energy demand that would, to my mind, outweigh the benefits of a low carbon design. I therefore give this consideration limited weight.
19. In the light of the above, I have decided, on balance, that there are no material considerations that indicate a decision contrary to the development plan would be acceptable in this particular case.
20. I found the conversion of the barn to be acceptable and the improvements to the landscaping to be welcomed. Nevertheless, I conclude, in respect of the main issue, that the appeal site is not an appropriate location for a new dwelling having regard to national and local planning policies relating to development in the countryside and the principles of sustainable development. The proposal is therefore contrary to the Framework, adopted CS Policy CS14 and DS and PP Policies DSP1 and DSP6 as they relate to the provision of new development outside settlements and the protection of the countryside.
21. Although the conversion of the barn would be acceptable, given that it is proposed as part of a comprehensive redevelopment of the site, I do not consider that this part of the proposal is clearly severable as it is not physically and functionally independent. A split decision is therefore not appropriate in this case.

Conclusions

22. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the proposal is not in accordance with the development plan, when read as a whole, and that the appeal should be dismissed.

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR