

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 September 2016

by Alison Partington BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 20th October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/P1805/D/16/3155534

The Barn at Brookhouse, 47 Brookhouse Road, Barnt Green B60 1QP

- 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 Sukhdev Badesha against the decision of Bromsgrove District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/0634, dated 22 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 26 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is a two storey extension to provide a family room at ground floor and one bedroom at first floor.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey extension to provide a family room at ground floor and one bedroom at first floor at The Barn at Brookhouse, 47 Brookhouse Road, Barnt Green B60 1QP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/0634, dated 22 June 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Existing and Proposed Plans Drawing No. 1070 PL-01 Rev B; Existing and Proposed Elevations Drawing No. 1070 PL-02 Rev B; and Existing and Proposed Site Plans Drawing No. 1070 PL-03 Rev B .
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in the appeal are:
 - Whether or not the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt for the purposes of the development plan and the *National Planning Policy Framework* (the Framework);
 - The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt;
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property; and
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- If the proposal is inappropriate development, whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify it.

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development

3. Paragraphs 89 and 90 of the Framework set out the forms of development that are not inappropriate within the Green Belt. These include the extension or alteration of a building, provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
4. Policy DS2 of the *Bromsgrove District Local Plan (adopted January 2004)* (BDLP) indicates that in the Green Belt permission will not be given, except in very special circumstances, for the construction of new buildings, unless it meets one of the specified criteria. These include the limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings subject to the provisions of Policy S11 and S12. Policy S12 refers to replacement dwellings which is not applicable to this appeal, but Policy S11 indicates that a 'limited extension' is one that does not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original dwelling. Although these policies are of a certain age, they are broadly in accordance with the Framework, and I give them weight accordingly.
5. The appellant has calculated that the proposed extension would represent a 25% increase in floorspace. The Council has not disputed this or provided any evidence to the contrary. In my opinion, this represents a modest increase in floorspace, and so it would not result in a disproportionate addition to the property. As a result, I consider that the proposal would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Consequently, the proposal would not be contrary to the Framework, or to Policy DS2 of the BDLP.

Openness

6. Openness is an essential characteristic of the Green Belt. The proposed extension would increase the footprint of the dwelling, and the mass and the bulk of the property would be increased by additional built development. Whilst this would lead to a reduction in openness, the loss would be a small one. In deeming some forms of building in the Green Belt not inappropriate, the Framework allows for a reduction in the openness of the Green Belt in some circumstances. Given my finding above (that the proposal is not inappropriate) this is one of those circumstances. Therefore, I am satisfied that significant harm to the Green Belt would not be caused by the scheme.

Character and Appearance

7. The appeal property is a former barn that has a simple linear form, and which retains much of its agricultural character. Window and door openings are limited, with a large ratio of solid wall to openings. Policy C27C of the BDLP states that where buildings of a traditional form and distinctive character have been converted, extensions will not be permitted where they would detract from the plain, simple and utilitarian appearance of the original building. Further advice on this is given in *Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 4 : Conversion of Rural Buildings (adopted January 2004)* (SPG).

8. The proposed extension would be located to the front of the building, creating an L-shaped dwelling. Like the host building, the extension would have a clean and simple form and avoids unnecessary domestic architectural detailing. In addition, the proposed elevations would have a high solid to void ratio. As such, the extension would respect the agricultural character and appearance of the barn. Thus, whilst it would not reflect the simple linear form of the original barn, the extension would not appear out of keeping with the rest of the building, and the resulting dwelling would retain a strong agricultural character.
9. Overall, I consider that the proposal would not unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host property. Accordingly, there would be no conflict with Policy C27C of the BDLP or the SPG.

Conclusion and Conditions

10. For the reasons set out above I conclude the appeal should be allowed.
11. In addition to the standard implementation condition, I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant plans, as this provides certainty. In the interests of the character and appearance of the area a condition is required to control the external appearance of the extension.

Alison Partington

INSPECTOR