



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 February 2017

by Graham Chamberlain BA MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 17th March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/V2635/W/16/3164427

Station Farm Cottage, Station Road, Stanhoe, Norfolk PE31 8QN

- 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 & Mrs D Miller against the decision of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01226/F, dated 1 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 14 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of the existing dwelling and its replacement with a new dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the demolition of the existing dwelling and its replacement with a new dwelling at Station Farm Cottage, Station Road, Stanhoe, Norfolk PE31 8QN, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 16/01226/F, dated 1 July 2016, subject to the conditions in the schedule at the end of this decision letter.

Preliminary Matters

2. During my site visit I was able to observe the appeal site from both Station Farm and The Station House.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this appeal are the effect of the proposal on local built heritage and the character and appearance of the area more generally.

Reasons

4. The proposal before me follows the dismissal of a previous appeal¹ at the site for the demolition of the existing building and the erection of a new dwelling. Save for the adoption of Policy DM5 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan 2016 (DMP), I have not seen or been presented with anything to suggest there have been relevant changes to local or national planning policy since this decision was made or that the circumstances in and around the appeal site have change significantly either. Similar planning applications should be considered in a similar manner and therefore the previous appeal decision is a material consideration of considerable weight.

¹ APP/V2635/W/15/3130537

The effect of the proposal on local built heritage

5. The Inspector, in determining the previous appeal, found that the former farmhouse was a non-designated heritage asset. This is due to the building's age and because the main part of its construction reflects the local building style of the area, due to the use of brick and flint elements. It also has a strong association with the adjacent farm buildings and thus the wider agricultural landscape. There is also an association with the former rail station to the south. I have no reasons to disagree with the previous Inspector's comprehensive assessment in respect of this matter. Therefore, I too consider the building to be a non-designated heritage asset.
6. However, the building has been much altered with the insertion of unsympathetic and unbalanced windows and numerous alterations undertaken in inappropriate materials. Moreover, the large two storey brick section detracts from the more locally distinctive flint finish of the main part of the building. These factors suppress the overall significance of the building and its contribution to the built heritage of the area. This is especially so when it is compared to other buildings nearby that have better retained their original character and identity.
7. Again, I agree with the previous Inspector that the overall significance of the building is limited due to the extent of unsympathetic alterations to the building. There is nothing before me that would justify a different conclusion. As such, I conclude that the loss of the building would result in some limited harm to the local built heritage of the area and this is to be taken into account and weighed in my overall assessment.

The effect on the character and appearance of the area

8. The proposed dwelling has been designed so that it would reflect the local vernacular with a combination of flint and brick to the exterior walls. This would integrate the proposed building with nearby structures including the adjacent farm. The front elevation would be well balanced with a simple and symmetrical placement of timber fenestration. This would improve the street scene. The proposed front elevation is largely unaltered from the previous appeal and the Inspector found it to be acceptable, as do I. Moreover, the side gables would be well proportioned and finished in a combination of flint and brick and a chimney would be sited along the ridge to add a period flavour and articulate the ridge line.
9. The concerns with the previous appeal scheme, which ultimately resulted in the appeal being dismissed, were with the design and scale of the proposed rear projecting element. To address this, the character of the front elevation of the appeal scheme now continues into the side elevations. Unlike the previous appeal scheme the two storey rear projection would be subservient to the side gables of the property being shallower in depth. This would result in a clear hierarchy to the scale and form of the building. The rear projection would also have a simple gabled form and detailing that would be consistent with the front elevation. As a consequence, the rear projection would not appear as an overly dominant or discordant feature in views from Station Road or other nearby vantage points. In this respect the appellant has satisfactorily addressed the main limitation evident in the previous scheme.

10. Moreover, the proposed garage has been reduced in scale and moved further into the site. This would create a sense of space between the proposed structures. As a result, they would not present a perception that the proposed house and garage would be harmful in-depth development.
11. The proposed house would be wider and larger than the existing but it would be positioned further back into the site behind a front garden. As such, the proposal would not appear unduly large in its plot and the simple and traditional scale and form would ensure the size of the proposed dwelling would be compatible with nearby buildings. There has been some debate over the original boundary of the residential curtilage. Notwithstanding this, the boundary hedge with the adjoining meadow would be reinstated as part of the proposal thereby restoring and redefining the landscape character of this area as a distinct feature from the residential curtilage of the house. A new wall would also be built to define the house from the adjoining farm yard. As such, the scale and position of the house, and the boundaries of its curtilage, would be integrated with the area.
12. I therefore conclude that the proposal would preserve and in some ways enhance the character and appearance of the area. As such, the proposal would adhere to Policy DM5 of the DMP, which seeks to secure high quality replacement dwellings which respect the scale and character of the area and the street scene. The proposal also adheres to Policy CS08 of the Core Strategy 201, which seeks for development to respond to and maintain the existing context and character of the area. This aim is consistent with Paragraph 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework and can be afforded significant weight.

Other Matters

13. Concerns have been raised that the occupation of the proposed house so close to the adjoining farm could prejudice the living conditions of future occupants. However, although marginally further away, the same could be said of the existing house and therefore this is not a matter that would justify withholding planning permission.

Conditions

14. I have had regard to the advice in the Planning Practice Guide and the list of conditions suggested by the Council. In the interests of safeguarding the rural character and appearance of the area it is necessary for the development to be implemented in accordance with the approved drawings, for the existing house to be demolished and for materials and landscaping (hard and soft) to be approved. Moreover, and exceptionally, it is necessary to remove some permitted development rights as the high quality of the proposed design has justified the loss of the existing heritage asset and therefore it is necessary to preserve this benefit.
15. In the interests of highway safety, it is necessary to impose those conditions relating to the site access recommended by the Council. In the interests of recording local heritage it is necessary to record the building prior to demolition. To preserve as yet unknown archaeology it is necessary to secure a programme of archaeological investigation and the proper recording of any finds. To safeguard biodiversity it is necessary to secure the development's implementation in accordance with the relevant bat and owl survey and that the building is demolished at the optimum time of year.

16. The submitted drawings do not contain elevations of the proposed boundary wall with the neighbouring farm so it is necessary to secure these details. Likewise it is necessary to ensure a hedge is planted alongside the boundary with the adjoining meadow so as to reinstate and preserve an important landscape feature.
17. As the safe removal of asbestos is covered by other legislation, it is unnecessary to impose conditions in this respect. Likewise, it is unnecessary for a Construction Traffic Management Plan and Access Route to be submitted given the modest scale of the proposal.

Conclusion

18. The appeal scheme would incorporate a number of design measures that would improve the environmental performance of the proposed house when considered against the existing. Furthermore, the proposed dwelling would provide a better standard of accommodation whilst exhibiting a design that would respond positively to the local distinctiveness of this part of Norfolk.
19. Some of the benefits could be accrued from a refurbishment of the existing building. However, the proposal, if constructed with the integrity and design philosophy demonstrated to date, which can be secured through planning conditions, would have an overall appearance that would improve upon the existing and it is this matter that ultimately justifies the demolition of the non-designated heritage asset.
20. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude the appeal should be allowed.

Graham Chamberlain
INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall commence before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans; 2/602/21, 2/602/22A, 2/602/23 and 2/602/25.
3. No development shall commence on any external surface of the development until a sample panel of the materials to be used for the external surfaces of the building hereby permitted has been erected on the site for the inspection and written approval of the Local Planning Authority. The sample panel shall measure at least 1 metre x 1 metre using the proposed materials, mortar type, bond and pointing technique. The development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.
4. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the vehicular access shall be provided and thereafter retained at the position shown on the approved plan (drawing number 2/602/23) in accordance with the highway specification (Dwg. No. TRAD 4). Arrangement shall be made for surface water

drainage to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the highway carriageway.

5. Vehicular access to and egress from the adjoining highway shall be limited to the access shown on drawing No. 2/602/23 only. Any other access or egresses shall be permanently closed, and the highway verge shall be reinstated in accordance with a detailed scheme to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority, concurrently with the bringing into use of the new access.
6. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted any access gate(s) shall be hung to open inwards, set back, and thereafter retained a minimum distance of 5 metres from the near channel edge of the adjacent carriageway. Any sidewalls / fences / hedges adjacent to the access shall be splayed at an angle of 45 degrees from each of the (outside) gateposts to the front boundary of the site.
7. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the proposed on-site car parking and turning area shall be laid out, levelled, surfaced and drained in accordance with the approved plan and retained thereafter available for that specific use.
8. No demolition shall take place within the site until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of historic building recording which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority. In this case the recording will comprise a photographic survey of the building in accordance with a brief issued by Norfolk Historic Environment Service.
9. No development shall take place until a Written Scheme of Investigation for a programme of archaeological works has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include:
 1. An assessment of the significance of heritage assets present
 2. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
 3. The programme for post investigation assessment of recovered material
 4. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
 5. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
 6. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
 7. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organization to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.
10. No demolition/development shall take place other than in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition 9.
11. The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition 9; and the provision to be made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

14. The demolition of the existing dwelling and the removal and/or reuse of materials shall be undertaken in accordance with a timetable and schedule to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development.
15. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the mitigation measures laid out in the Bat and Owl Survey Final prepared by Phillip Parker Associates on 29th September 2014 and the Survey Update prepared on 14th September 2016.
16. Prior to the commencement of development, full details of bat boxes to be installed within the existing trees and within the dwelling and garage hereby approved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Six bat boxes shall be erected on 2 no. trees within the grounds of the property prior to the commencement of any development on site, including demolition of the existing dwelling. The boxes erected on the garage and dwelling shall be installed prior to the use of the property. The bat boxes shall be retained thereafter.
17. No development shall commence until a landscaping scheme for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include the following details:
 1. All existing trees and hedgerows on the land that are to be retained with measures for their protection throughout the course of the development;
 2. The hard and soft landscaping to the front garden and site frontage;
 3. The surface materials to be used in the vehicular cross over and the driveway;
 4. A hedge along the southern boundary of the residential curtilage with the adjacent meadow.

All landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Any existing or proposed trees or plants that within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species as those originally planted, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written approval to any variation.

18. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, a plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority indicating the positions, heights, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected including details of any vehicular access gates. The boundary treatment shall be completed before the building is occupied or in accordance with a timetable to be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
19. Notwithstanding the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 1, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), the enlargement, improvement or other alteration to the dwelling house shall not be allowed without the prior granting of a specific planning permission.

End of Schedule