

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 April 2017

by Megan Thomas Barrister-at-Law

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

Decision date: 10 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/E2205/D/17/3170238

Rogley Barn, Cranbrook Road, Biddenden, Kent TN27 8ET

- 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 Craig Jensen against the decision of Ashford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01759/AS, dated 29 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 30 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is an extension to the existing barn to form a sun-room and new bedroom and to amend internal floor layout to provide new bedroom and staircase and to provide a new bio-system for sewerage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for an extension to the existing barn to form a sun-room and new bedroom and to amend internal floor layout to provide new bedroom and staircase and to provide a new bio-system for sewerage at Rogley Barn, Cranbrook Road, Biddenden, Kent TN27 8ET in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/01759/AS, dated 29 November 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 materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Proposed Elevations RB/CJ/0616/120 Rev A, Existing and Proposed Floor Plans RB/CJ/0616/121 Rev A, Roof Plans Existing & Proposed RB/CJ/0616/122 Rev A, Section A-A RB/CJ/0616/123 Rev A, Existing and Proposed Block Plans RB/CJ/0616/124 Rev A & Proposed Drainage System Layout RB/CJ/0616/125 Rev A.
 - 4) Once the development hereby permitted is completed, the appeal site shall be made available to the Local Planning Authority for the purposes of inspection to ensure that there has been compliance with the above conditions.
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Main Issues

2. The main issues in the appeal are the effect of the extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding landscape, and its effect on the significance of the Coach House as a non-designated heritage asset.

Reasons

3. The site is located in a rural area off a track on the south side of Cranbrook Road and is not visible from the road. It is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty 'AONB' and adjacent to Hemsted Forest Wildlife site. Rogley Barn 'the Barn' has been converted to a dwelling and it is a detached timber clad building with a pitched tiled roof. The site also includes a French barn known as the Coach House and it is located to the north of Rogley Barn. There is also a dwelling to the west of the appeal site.
4. The Coach House is a non-designated heritage asset. Rogley Barn is not listed and it is neither a designated nor a non-designated heritage asset. Both buildings are old and aesthetically attractive.
5. The appeal scheme includes the erection of a two storey extension to the eastern elevation of the Barn with a footprint of about 3.8m by 6.6m, incorporating some areas of glazing. Permitted development rights to extend the dwelling have been removed as a result of a previous planning permission.
6. Local Plan policy allows for the extension of existing dwellings provided that the extension respects the scale, massing and materials of the existing building, that it is appropriate in size and design and is subordinate to the existing dwelling. Harm to the landscape and character of the area should be avoided. SPG Note 10 *Domestic Extensions in Urban and Rural Areas* states that some extensions may be unacceptable as a matter of principle because of the likely damaging effect on the plan form or built form and character of the building in the landscape.
7. The proposed extension would match the height of the existing barn and replicate the barn hip. It would be a modest width. I consider that it would be a subordinate extension which would not dominate the existing barn. Lowering the height of the roof of the extension below the main ridgeline would not have been a sympathetic design solution and the proposal succeeds in respecting the scale, massing and materials of the existing building. The proposal would not result in an overly large or sprawling dwelling at odds with its original appearance as a compact agricultural barn.
8. It is regrettable that a previous occupier of the barn inserted an unauthorised first floor roof addition and a ground floor boiler room to the south side of the building. However, both are now immune from enforcement. The resulting building is not symmetrical and I consider that the proposed 'step back' of the southern elevation of the extension would act to limit the size of the extension appropriately without any harm to the existing character or appearance of the barn.
9. The proposed scheme includes some significant areas of glazing. However, at both the front and rear entrances to the dwelling there is vertical glazing and a

strong vertical emphasis. Consequently, the inclusion of the proposed glazing is not out of place and the lack of natural light entering the building in this particular case adds some justification to the provision of the proposed fenestration. It is possible that some old fabric of the barn would be lost but this is unlikely to be extensive and does not tip the scales in favour of refusal of the extension.

10. Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs. I do not consider that the proposal would unduly harm the host dwelling and I consider that the AONB landscape would be conserved.
11. The Coach House is said by the Council to be a "reportedly reconstructed barn of French origin ... considered to be an extremely rare form of building. It is thought that the reconstruction incorporates the majority of original material from a continental timber-frame barn. It is said to be possibly seventeenth century.
12. No works to the Coach House are proposed as part of the scheme before me. From land on and around the south side of Rogley Barn, a very limited part of the end bay of the Coach House can be glimpsed through vegetation. The proposed extension would reduce its visibility by a very small degree. The vast majority of views of the Coach House would be unaffected by the proposal and I have come to the view that there would be no material reduction in its significance as a non-designated heritage asset or in the quality, character or appearance of its setting as a result of the development before me.
13. Overall, I conclude that the proposed extension would not have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the surrounding AONB landscape, and its effect on the significance of the Coach House as a non-designated heritage asset would be well within acceptable limits. The extension would not breach saved policies GP12 and HG9 of the Ashford Borough Local Plan (adopted 2000) or policy TRS17 of the Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD (adopted 2010) or policies CS1 and CS15 of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted 2008) or advice in SPG No.7 *The Reuse of Agricultural Buildings* or in SPG No.10 *Domestic Extensions in Urban and Rural Areas*.

Other Matters

14. The works required to install the proposed bio system for sewerage would not have any long term impact on the scenic beauty of the landscape as they would be predominantly underground. The extension would not affect the living conditions of any neighbours given the orientation and separation from the nearest dwelling.

Conditions

15. The Council have suggested some conditions in the event that the appeal was allowed. I have considered the imposition of conditions in the light of advice in National Planning Practice Guidance. In order to protect the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the AONB landscape, I have attached a condition which requires materials used in the external surfaces of the extension to match those used in the main building. For the avoidance of doubt, I have attached a condition which ties the proposed development to being built out in accordance with the submitted/approved plans. Given that

the dwelling is located down a track where it is not easily seen from public vantage points and given that it has previously been altered without the requisite planning permission I have attached a condition which requires the completed development hereby permitted to be made available for an inspection by the Local Planning Authority in order to ensure that the conditions have been met. This is necessary given the limits of the powers of entry available to the local planning authority and it will ensure that the character and appearance of the area is protected by development built in accordance with the plans.

Conclusion

16. Having taken into account all representations made, for the reasons given above, I allow the appeal.

Megan Thomas

INSPECTOR