
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 June 2017

by S J Papworth DipArch(Glos) RIBA

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

Decision date: 13 June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/B1225/D/17/3170832

Longacre Barn, The Old Dairy, Briantspuddle, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 7HT

- 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 J Barnsley against the decision of Purbeck District Council.
 - The application Ref 6/2016/0665, dated 13 October 2016, was refused by the Council by notice dated 3 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is removal of an existing garden shed and greenhouse, provision of a new garden store/workshop.
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Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal.

Main Issue

2. This is the effect of the development on the architectural or historic significance of the listed buildings and their settings, and on the character and appearance of the Piddle Valley Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. Longacre Barn is part of Grade II Listed Building that formed part of the Debenhams model dairy farm and was used as the mares' foaling block. It has previously been converted to a dwelling (Refs; 6/1991/0440 and 0441). To the north are dwellinghouses formed by the conversion of the stables which are part of the same listed building. To the east is a former outbuilding that has extant, but not yet implemented, permission and consent for conversion to an annex (Refs; 6/2016/0346 and 0347).
 4. The Development Plan includes the Purbeck Local Plan Part 1 and Policy LHH on landscape, historic environment and heritage requires development proposals to conserve the appearance, setting, character, interest and integrity of heritage assets. Policy D concerning design requires proposals to positively integrate with their surroundings.
 5. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Section 72(1) of the same Act requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.
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6. Paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. The courts have determined that considerable importance and weight should be given to harm found to the significance of listed buildings. Paragraph 56 states that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment; good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.
7. Whilst there has been some separation of the previous circulation areas of the dairy to provide for the more recent domestic uses, the individual buildings can still clearly be seen and understood for their functional arrangement of working areas, grain storage and residential uses. The mares' foaling block is of particular interest for its historic significance of the former use, and for its architectural significance due to the use of columns along the outer, south facing, elevation. The canted corners referred to in the listing description are an important part of the circulation arrangement. All of the dairy buildings should be considered as a group since their historic significance resides in their one-time working relationship, and the gaps between buildings are important to that understanding.
8. Limited weight can be attached to the existence of the shed and glasshouse as a precedent due to the Council's evidence that no permission is in place for that placement. It is likely that the Council's reference to 'structures' includes the fence that presently blocks some of the through views. Weight should however be afforded their presence in fact, as the Council do not appear to contend that they will be removed through any enforcement action. Nevertheless, whilst the gap between the foaling block and the outbuilding is presently occupied by the unattractive small shed and the glasshouse, there is sufficient space around and through them to retain evidence of the previous circulation.
9. The proposed store/workshop would bring about the removal of the two present structures and would occupy a slightly greater width over their extreme outer west end. The depth would be greater at the east end as the new building is designed to follow the angle of the present low boundary treatment. The total width, and the lack of the transparency of at least the present glasshouse, would however cover a substantial part of the former circulation gap and cut-off through views, thus causing harm to the historic significance of the buildings and their associated circulation area.
10. The introduction of the structure would erode the architectural significance of the frontage, being seen in too close a juxtaposition. The fact that there are no public views of this feature does mean that there would be limited harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area, but the preservation of listed buildings does not rely on there being public views; they should be protected for their own sake. The Council object to the angled layout of the rear wall, and this could result in either an angled rear gutter line or a twist in the roof plane, with the appearance being at odds with that of the former dairy buildings.
11. The level of harm is 'less than substantial', a differentiation required between paragraphs 133 and 134 of the Framework. In this case the latter applies and

this states that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. The buildings do appear to be in a viable use, and whilst not the original one, should now be regarded as the optimum use consistent with their preservation. There does not appear to be a risk of the buildings falling out of that use for want of a store in this location. The decision to convert the present 'store and garage' to an annex should have been seen as part of an overall appraisal of the storage and living accommodation needs of the building, with the best interest of the building in mind. Only limited weight attaches to the removal of the present shed and glasshouse due to their small size, the transparency of the glasshouse, and the gap between.

12. To conclude, whilst the effect on the conservation area is acceptable due to a lack of public views, the proposal would cause harm to the architectural and historic significance of the listed buildings and there are no public benefits sufficient to outweigh that harm. The works are contrary to the statutory test in section 66(1) of the 1990 Act and to Policy LHH of the Local Plan, and would not accord with the aims of the Framework with regard to the protection of designated heritage assets. The arrangement does not reach the level of design sought under paragraph 56 of the Framework nor Policy D of the Local Plan. For the reasons given above it is concluded that the appeal should be dismissed.

S J Papworth

INSPECTOR