



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 June 2017

by Jonathan Price BA(Hons) DMS DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 14th June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z2830/D/17/3173628

Hayloft, Blacklocks Hill, Overthorpe, Northamptonshire OX17 2BS

- 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 and Mrs Hart against the decision of South Northants District Council.
 - The application Ref S/2017/0237/FUL, dated 17 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 24 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is change of use of garage to habitable accommodation. First floor extension over garage. Erection of 1.5 storey extension linking garage and dwelling. Internal & external alterations including insertion of new windows & doors, upgrading of existing windows & doors to powder coated aluminium units, replace some of the timber lintels with stone lintels.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for change of use of garage to habitable accommodation, first floor extension over garage, erection of 1.5 storey extension linking garage and dwelling, internal & external alterations including insertion of new windows & doors, upgrading of existing windows & doors to powder coated aluminium units and replacing some of the timber lintels with stone lintels at Hayloft, Blacklocks Hill, Overthorpe, Northamptonshire OX17 2BS in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref S/2017/0237/FUL, dated 17 January 2017, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawings nos 16.94.10 and 16.94.11, 1:1250 location plan.
 - 3) The external walls of the extension, where to be built in stone, shall be laid, dressed, coursed and pointed in accordance with a sample panel (minimum 1 metre squared in size) which shall be constructed on site to be inspected and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development hereby permitted takes place. The sample panel shall be constructed in a position that is protected and readily accessible for viewing in good natural daylight from a distance of 3 metres. The panel shall be retained on site for the duration of the construction contract.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and its surroundings.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to an existing detached house, Hayloft, and its separate double garage. It is proposed to lengthen the existing dwelling, subsuming the existing garage, to meet the accommodation needs of the appellants' growing family. The house derives from the conversion of a former farm building which was permitted to be re-built in 1995. The separate garage is modern and presumably built under permitted development rights. The re-built barn, which is now Hayloft, was later permitted to be used as a holiday home in 1999. The holiday occupancy condition was lifted by the Council in 2013 and Hayloft permitted to be occupied by the appellants solely and only in association with the roofing business operated from the modern storage building immediately to its north.
4. The appeal property is in the countryside for planning policy purposes but is adjacent to existing development which formerly comprised the Overthorpe Lodge rural estate. The buildings previously occupying this site would have formed part of the original farm complex. Overthorpe Lodge and most of its farm buildings immediately to the south of the appeal site have most recently been in use as a school.
5. The appellants' parents, the father having originally started the roofing business here, occupy the adjacent house to the east. This dwelling and its range of outbuildings also appear once to have been part of the Overthorpe Lodge farm complex. There is a new detached house to the west of the appeal site. This is or was possibly connected with the school as there are tennis courts beyond it, adjacent to the appellants' storage building.
6. The resulting extension would be at 1.5 storeys and pitched lower than the original house. Whilst effectively an extension to a new dwelling formed from the re-building of a barn, the enlarged house would retain the form and proportions of an agricultural building, reflecting the original pattern of development here. I noticed similarly elongated former farm buildings comprise parts of the adjacent school site. The use of rooflights would not be excessive and the quite simple and well-proportioned fenestration, using coated aluminium frames, would avoid an overly fussy, domestic appearance to the resulting dwelling. In respect of its design and materials the enlarged house would retain the traditional character of a converted barn.
7. The Council's decision refers to the saved policies of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan (LP) adopted October 1997, its supplementary planning documents addressing both residential extensions and the re-use of rural buildings and the parts of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the Planning Practice Guidance concerning design. The extension would remain subservient to the main house and the resulting form, design and materials would reflect the character of a traditional farm building. Therefore the type, scale, siting, design and materials of the development proposed would be compatible with the existing rural character of the built surroundings and comply with LP policy G3.

8. Having had regard to the Council's supplementary planning documents I find no conflict with parts (I) and (IV) of LP Policy H17, in respect of the proposed extensions respecting the scale and character of the existing dwelling and of neighbouring development. The conflict found with LP Policy H17(V) over the 50% limit for extensions to dwellings in restraint villages and open countryside can be given only limited weight as being not consistent with the Framework, following the advice in paragraph 215.
9. For the reasons given there would be no material conflict with the general design principles set out in LP Policy ENV1. There would be some conflict with part (V) of LP Policy ENV16 which restricts barn conversions to the size of the original building. However, treating this proposal on its individual merits and taking into account the conversion was of a recently re-built structure rather than that of a traditional farm building, any conflict with Policy ENV16 would not outweigh the general policy support in favour of the proposal.

Conditions and conclusion

10. In addition to the standard time limit for commencement it is necessary that a condition specifies the plans to which the decision relates, in the interests of certainty. The condition recommended by the Council requiring its prior approval of a sample panel of the stonework walling is necessary in the interests of the satisfactory appearance of the development.
11. The occupancy condition serves to tie the appellants' occupation to this dwelling in association with an established business which would be costly and inconvenient to relocate. That it would meet the needs of a growing family, help maintain the existing business in this location and be generally sympathetic to the rural character of the built surroundings means this proposal satisfies the economic, social and environmental strands of sustainable development, thereby gaining support through the Framework. As a consequence, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed subject to the conditions specified.

Jonathan Price

INSPECTOR