

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 May 2017

by Tom Gilbert-Wooldridge BA (Hons) MTP MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 23rd June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/D/17/3174342

The Stables, College Farm, Barton Road, Pulloxhill MK45 5HP

- 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 Dr Kruszezwska against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - The application Ref CB/16/05642/FULL, dated 5 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 31 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is single storey and two storey extensions to form chalet bungalow.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and Pulloxhill Conservation Area and the setting of the listed College Farm.

Reasons

3. Pulloxhill Conservation Area contains the historic core of the village of Pulloxhill and a number of buildings of varying ages, sizes and architectural styles. Its character and appearance and its significance derives from the survival of historic buildings including those associated with the village's agricultural past. The Grade II listed College Farm adjacent to the appeal site is a prominent two storey farmhouse at the junction of the High Street with Barton Road and Flitton Road. An access track between College Farm and the appeal site leads to open countryside, forming part of the agricultural and rural setting of this listed building and contributing to its significance.
 4. The appeal building known as The Stables is one of a number of buildings associated with College Farm that have been converted to residential use and appear to be in separate ownership. A number of modern alterations have taken place to The Stables giving it a more domestic character and appearance. There has also been recent modern development including a garage between The Stables and College Farm and a large house to the east of College Farm. Nevertheless, when viewed from the access track and the junction between the High Street and Barton and Flitton Roads, the original farmyard layout that contains The Stables is clear. The Stables and adjoining buildings are single storey and appear subservient to College Farm as former agricultural barns. These characteristics are only partly diminished by the modern alterations to The Stables and recent modern development. There
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remains a visual as well as an historical relationship between The Stables and College Farm and the conservation area. Thus, The Stables makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of College Farm and the significance of both heritage assets.

5. Given the mix of architectural styles and building sizes within the conservation area, the proposed development would not look out of place in terms of its design and scale. However, the central section of the building would increase considerably in footprint and height and would significantly alter the character and appearance of the host building. It would no longer be a subservient building within a farmyard setting when viewed from the access track and road junction next to College Farm. As a result, there would be a negative effect on the character and appearance of the host building and Pulloxhill Conservation Area as well as the setting of College Farm. The significance of the two heritage assets would also be harmed.
6. The harm to the significance of the conservation area would be less than substantial as the proposed development would not be very visible further along the High Street away from the access track and road junction. Moreover, the composition of historic buildings within the conservation area would largely survive. Similarly, the harm to the significance of the listed building would be less than substantial as the development would only partly erode the setting of College Farm. Nevertheless, the harm to both heritage assets would still be of a moderate scale due to the extent of changes to The Stables and its impact on the farmyard setting.
7. In line with paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), such harm needs to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The appellant highlights the structural condition of The Stables, which evidently needs to be addressed. However, it has not been demonstrated that the proposed development is the only way in which this could be achieved. I note the desire to improve the amount of living space for occupiers of The Stables, but this does not represent a public benefit. The development would make a more efficient use of land, but only to a limited extent as The Stables would remain a single dwelling. Thus, the public benefits are insufficient to outweigh the harm to the significance of the conservation area and listed building.
8. In conclusion, the proposed development would have a negative effect on the host building and Pulloxhill Conservation Area and the setting of College Farm. Therefore, it would not accord with Policies CS14, CS15, DM3 and DM13 of the Central Bedfordshire (North) Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009. These policies seek high quality development appropriate in scale and design to their setting that protects, conserves and enhances listed buildings and conservation areas. It would also conflict with the NPPF in terms of not providing good design or sustaining the significance of heritage assets.

Conclusion

9. For the above reasons, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Tom Gilbert-Wooldridge

INSPECTOR