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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 June 2017

**by Louise Nurser BA (Hons) Dip UP MRTPI**

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

**Decision date: 29 June 2017**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/Z2830/D/17/3175240**

**1 Franklin Court, Yardley Gobion, NN12 7UP**

- 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 Brian and Mrs Hayley Maloney against the decision of South Northamptonshire District Council.
  - The application Ref S/2016/3169/FUL, dated 30 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 15 February 2017.
  - The development proposed is extension above existing garage and storage area to create further bedroom.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host property and the wider group of former agricultural buildings and whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Yardley Gobion Conservation Area (CA).

## Reasons

3. The converted farm building faces onto a modern development within Franklin Court at the corner of Grafton Road. Due to the topography of the area Grafton Road slopes up towards High Street and there is a substantial change in levels between the existing car port linked to the appeal site and the converted farm building. As such, the appeal site is at a sensitive and conspicuous location within the wider streetscape. Moreover, the host property and the adjoining former farm buildings, whilst functionally separate to each other as residential units retain a visual coherence reflecting their former agrarian use.
4. The existing stone car port sits proud of the building line. However, the integrity of the hipped roof of the former farm buildings has been retained as the car port sits below the eaves. This means the original detailing has not been adversely affected. Moreover, due to the significant changes in level as the land rises up from Grafton Road within Franklin Court the car port appears subservient to the main converted farm building. In addition, I was aware from my site visit that the pitch of the existing car port reflected the pitch of the roofs found elsewhere within the village.

5. I am aware that the appellants intend to use materials sympathetic to the existing former farm buildings and the wider area, and would be willing to move the roof lights from the front elevation. Also, I understand that the design of the proposal before me is a scaled back version of a previous submission. Nonetheless, I must consider the appeal before me on its own merits.
6. The appeal proposals would result in a significant increase in height to enable the construction of an additional bedroom, ensuite and home office. This would result in the roof line breaching the eaves of the existing roof and would have a significantly adverse visual impact on both the host property and the wider group as the intersect of the pitched and original hipped roof would appear clumsy and incongruous. Moreover, the shallow pitch of the raised roof would appear out of place. The consequence of the increase in height of the car port together with the introduction of additional windows would be a two storey extension of a domestic appearance which would neither appear in keeping, nor be subservient to the host property. This would adversely alter the integrity of the former farm buildings. This would be contrary to the provisions of the Supplementary Planning Guidance 'Residential Extensions' and Supplementary Planning Document 'The Re-Use of Rural Buildings' adopted 2011, which places great emphasis on the retention of the simple character and appearance of former agricultural buildings following conversion to housing.
7. At my site visit it was clear to me that care had been taken to retain, as much as possible, the simple unadorned, utilitarian nature of the former farm buildings. Notwithstanding that there already is some void space under the eaves of the car port, I conclude that the proposed development would have an adverse impact not only on the host property and the original farm buildings, but would be highly visible in the street scape particularly when viewed from across the green down Grafton Road. Therefore, the proposed development would be contrary to Policies G3(A), EV1, of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan (LP) adopted 1997. Whilst the LP predates the publication of the Framework, I consider these policies to be broadly consistent with paragraph 58 of the Framework as they require developments to respect and take into account local characteristics, including site levels and for the design to be compatible with the design and scale of adjoining land and buildings. As such I accord these policies significant weight.

#### *Conservation Area*

8. I have not been provided with a Conservation Area Appraisal for the Yardley Gobion Conservation Area (CA). However, at the time of my site visit I took the opportunity to visit the wider area where I was aware that an important aspect of the character of the CA is derived from the modest scale of the predominantly stone vernacular buildings within the village. Moreover, the integrity of the buildings including the former farm buildings, has for the most part been retained.
9. In coming to this conclusion, I have been mindful that I have been referred to there being no restrictions on future alterations on housing within Franklin Court. However, I can only consider the appeal before me and its impacts on the character or appearance of the CA.

10. Consequently, as I have concluded above, the proposed development would have an adverse impact on the host property, the original farm buildings and the street scape. Therefore, the appeal proposal would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA as a whole. I have however, concluded that the appeal proposal would result in less than substantial harm. I therefore must consider if there is a public benefit to the scheme which would outweigh the harm. Whilst I understand the desire of the appellants to provide further accommodation and to have a home office, this is a private benefit, as such the harm to the CA which I have identified above would not be outweighed by any public benefit.
11. In the absence of an overriding public benefit the appeal scheme would therefore be contrary to saved Policies G3, EV9 and EV10 of the LP and Policy BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2014.

*Other matters*

12. The appeal site lies to the south of a Grade 2 listed building. However, the Council considers that the setting of this building would not be affected by the proposed development. From what I have seen I would concur with this position.

**Conclusion**

13. For the reasons set out above I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

*L. Nurser*

INSPECTOR