The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 June 2017

by J Ayres BA Hons, Solicitor

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

Decision date: 12th July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N1730/W/17/3172034
The Barn, Dippenhall Farm, Dippenhall, Farnham, Surrey GU10 5EB

- 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 Joseph Wilson against the decision of Hart District Council.
- The application Ref 16/03280/FUL, dated 30 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 31 January 2017.
- The development proposed is the erection of a new dwelling and garage.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the countryside.

Reasons

3. There is an extant permission to redevelop the barn which, although largely destroyed, is located on the appeal site. Permission was originally granted to convert the barn to a dwelling in 1996. In 2013 the Council granted a Lawful Development Certificate to confirm that the 1996 permission had been implemented. In 2014 a replacement dwelling was approved, which provided for a part single storey, part one and a half storey dwelling, and mimicked the design of the consent for the original barn conversion. Accordingly the remains of the structure on the appeal site has a lawful residential use, and therefore the proposal would qualify as a replacement dwelling, to be considered in accordance with the aims of Policy RUR23 of the Hart District Local Plan 1996-2006.

4. Due to the significant distances between the properties in the surrounding area, the built form is sporadic and scattered, which enhances the rural character of the area. The repositioning of the dwelling within the appeal site would move the dwelling away from the boundary with The Hall, which would spread the built form further along Dippenhall Road. Moreover, the addition of a detached garage would intensify the development on the appeal site. These factors would individually and cumulatively harm the openness and rural character of the countryside. The built form would encroach into the openness of the area, and intensify development on this site, contrary to the supporting text of Policy RUR23 which stresses that replacement dwellings should not be intrusive in the countryside.

5. The proposal would be a substantial, two storey Hampshire barn style dwelling which would increase the height of the building to two storeys across its full width, with a ridge height in excess of eight metres. Due to the level of the site this significant increase in ridge height across the full width of the property would result in a structure that dominated the area at this point in the road. The dwelling would be significantly larger than the part single, part one and a half storey dwelling previously approved, and due to this significant increase in scale would appear as an incongruous addition to the area.

6. I accept that the general design principle of the proposed dwelling as a Hampshire style barn responds to the permission previously granted for the barn conversion. The Appellant sought pre-application advice from the Council and was advised that a 25% increase in overall floor space may be acceptable. However, the acceptability of a 26% increase in floor space would depend on the design, height, bulk and massing of the proposal when compared to the dwelling that it would replace. In my view the continuous two storey ridge height of the proposal, in comparison to the part one and a half storey, part single storey height of the original dwelling, would result in a dwelling that would be significantly larger than the original dwelling.

7. Accordingly, I find that the scale and design of the proposal would conflict with saved Policy RUR23 of the Hart District Local Plan 1996-2006 which seeks to ensure that replacement dwellings in the countryside are not intrusive, and that they are not significantly larger than the original dwelling.

Conclusion

8. For the reasons given above, and taking into account all other matters, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Ayres

INSPECTOR