
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 18 July 2017

by H Porter BA(Hons) PGDip IHBC

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

Decision date: 16 August 2017

Appeal A Ref: APP/W1850/W/17/3168756

Nupend Barn, Woolhope, Woolhope, HR1 4QH

- 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 Miss Morton-Saner against the decision of Herefordshire Council.
 - The application Ref 163840, dated 29 November 2011, was refused by notice dated 19 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is addition of Glass Garden Room similar to a greenhouse to the rear/side elevation of the property.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/W1850/Y/17/3168763

Nupend Barn, Woolhope, Woolhope, HR1 4QH

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Miss Morton-Saner against the decision of Herefordshire Council.
 - The application Ref 163841, dated 29 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 January 2017.
 - The works proposed are addition of Glass Garden Room similar to a greenhouse to the rear/side elevation of the property.
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Decisions

1. Appeal A is dismissed and Appeal B is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in both appeals is whether the works proposed and development would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building.

Reasons

3. Nupend Barn is a Grade II listed detached barn and granary situated in a rural valley landscape on the outskirts of Fownhope, within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The building has an 'L'-shape plan with two distinct ranges that demarcate the separate barn and granary elements. The shorter, granary range is of rubble sandstone with a timber lean-to projection; the longer range of the barn is timber-framed with oak infill and cladding. Both have clay double-Roman tile roofs.
4. Added to the Statutory List in 1985, the building has been subsequently converted for residential use, and various timber window and door openings inserted. Nonetheless, the form, scale and surviving historic fabric reflects the

building's traditional construction and agricultural use. I consider that an important aspect of the special interest and significance of the listed building is as an historic example of an agricultural building, the form and function of which remains clearly evident in its fabric, scale and footprint.

5. The appeal scheme proposes to add a greenhouse, constructed of glass and aluminium, in the angle of the building's barn and granary ranges. The longest length of the greenhouse would extend 7 metres along the rubble stone wall of the former granary. The proposed works would encase most of the junction between the two ranges and would also internalise a significant proportion of the rubble stone elevation. Even though the greenhouse would be of simple construction, with large amounts of glazing, the proposed works would nonetheless dilute the clear distinction between the separate barn and granary elements as well as screen elements of the building's historic form and fabric.
6. The greenhouse would terminate before the end of the historic timber lean-to, which projects from the end of the stone elevation. Although the 1961 photograph appears to show a lean-to extending the full width of the elevation, the proposal would introduce a roofline, pitch and scale that would be unrelated to any existing or historic element, even if the profile could be reduced in width. While the colour of the aluminium may appear similar to the existing timber joinery, the material itself would also be alien. As a result, the proposal would have an awkward relationship with the historic structure, imposing an uncomfortable addition that would detract from its original form and material treatment.
7. The construction and method of fixing the proposed greenhouse to the main dwelling may have a relatively low physical impact on the historic fabric, and also be relatively easy to demount. Be that as it may, the supporting statement emphasises the durability of the proposed structure, which, to my mind, would have a visual solidity and degree of permanence. Furthermore, while the greenhouse would not be insulated and not be an extension of the main dwelling per se, it would introduce a clearly domestic component to the main fabric of the barn, diminishing the sense of its origins as an agricultural building.
8. Overall, therefore, I consider the proposed works would harmfully impact on the legibility of the building's original plan-form, its historic fabric, and the physical narrative of its traditional use and function. Even though the proposed works would not be visible from public roads, they would nonetheless fail to preserve the special interest and significance of the listed building.

Planning balance

9. Paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that, when considering the impact of a proposal on a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. It confirms that, as I have found in this case, significance can be harmed by alterations to a heritage asset. In this case harm to the significance of the listed building would be less than substantial. Paragraph 134 of the Framework states that less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing the optimum viable use of the building.

10. There would be some economic benefit through employment associated with the construction phase. However this would be relatively short-term and represent a very minor public benefit. I note that the works would provide an opportunity to harvest rainwater. Although a laudable measure, in my judgement, the construction of a greenhouse would not be the only means by which rainwater could be successfully harvested on the site. I therefore consider that this aspect of the proposal carries very little weight as a wider public benefit.
11. No evidence has been put forward to indicate that the works would be essential to secure the optimum viable use of the listed building. The convenience and enhancement the proposed greenhouse would bring to the appellant would be a personal advantage. Satisfying the personal circumstances and wishes of the appellant do not amount to any wider public benefit. While an existing greenhouse blew down and the hard-landscaping in the rear portion of the garden limits, to some degree, where a sheltered replacement could be sited, this does not justify the harm that would result from the proposed works. Overall, the proposal would meet a private need and the identified public benefits are not sufficient to outweigh the harm to the designated heritage asset.

Other matters

12. While I find the proposal would unacceptably harm the special interest and significance of the listed building, given the scale and form of the development, I do not consider it would lead to any impact on the landscape or scenic beauty of the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. A lack of harm in this regard, however, does not alter my overall conclusion. Nor does the lack of impact in relation to noise, light, air contamination, land instability or groundwater pollution, or absence of objection from neighbours or the highway authority.

Conclusion – both Appeal A and Appeal B

13. The works and development would fail to preserve the listed building, or its features of special architectural interest, contrary to the clear expectations in Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act). There would also be a conflict with Policies LD4 and SD1 of the Herefordshire Local Plan: Core Strategy 2011 – 2031, adopted October 2015, which seek to protect, conserve and where possible enhance heritage assets, in particular emphasising the original the original form and function and ensure that distinctive features of existing buildings are safeguarded.
14. In considering whether to grant listed building consent or planning permission, the relevant Act requires decision makers to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building. Even though the overall harm would be less than substantial in this case, this overarching statutory duty must be given considerable importance and weight. For the reasons set out above, therefore, both Appeal A and Appeal B should be dismissed.

H Porter

INSPECTOR