
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 October 2017

by A J Mageean BA (Hons) BPI PhD MRTPI

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

Decision date: 16th October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L3245/D/17/3179107

Manor Court, Manor Farm Lane, Bridgnorth WV16 5HG

- 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 Timothy Grice against the decision of Shropshire Council.
 - The application Ref 17/01050/FUL, dated 3 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 28 April 2017
 - The development proposed is erection of a two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of a two storey side extension at Manor Court, Manor Farm Lane, Bridgnorth WV16 5HG in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 17/01050/FUL, dated 3 March 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: existing and proposed elevations A1/01 Rev B; existing and proposed floor plans A1/02 Rev B.
 - 3) No development shall commence until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved samples.
 - 4) No development shall take place until details of the design of all external windows and doors and any other external joinery have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These shall include full size details, 1:20 sections and 1:20 elevations of each joinery item which shall then be indexed on elevations on the approved drawings. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
 - 5) Prior to first occupation/use of the extension hereby permitted, an appropriately qualified and experienced Ecological Clerk of Works (ECW) shall provide a report to the local planning authority demonstrating implementation of the Great Crested Newt Method Statement (John Morgan, June 2016).

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host buildings and whether it would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Oldbury Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal building forms part of a small complex of former agricultural buildings which have been converted to residential use. I understand that they were part of an historic farmstead. These buildings appear to have evolved over time, though today form a rough 'U' shape with Manor Court comprising the southern section. The conversion of these buildings has retained much of their appearance as a group of traditional farm buildings, and notwithstanding their division into separate units they retain their close knit relationship. That said, the slight variations in scale, form and design within this grouping, along with some modern additions such as windows and porches, creates a degree of informality.
4. The existing 'U' shape configuration is typical of the layout of a farmstead, creating a central courtyard area. I accept that the location of the proposed extension on the southern elevation of Manor Court would be outside of the main 'U' shape. Nevertheless, as noted above, there is an existing degree of variance within this group, including the westernmost addition to Manor Rise. I also note that the courtyard area itself has been divided by a high brick wall. Overall my view is that it would be possible to accommodate a further modest addition in this location without undermining the character and appearance of this complex.
5. The proposed two storey addition would be positioned adjacent to the existing attractive sandstone gable wall. Whilst the appellant states that the importance of this wall would be enhanced by making it a feature of the planned addition, presumably by the extensive use of glazing to the southern elevation, it is clear that the visibility of this element externally would be lost. I also accept that such extensive glazing would itself be a departure from the traditional appearance of the barn structure. Nevertheless, for the most part a complementary range of architectural elements and palette of materials is proposed. Also, as the glazed wall would appear as part of the less visible southern elevation this would not in itself undermine the character of this complex.
6. As this addition would be close to the full height of the highest part of the barn complex it would be a sizable structure. However, the existing buildings themselves are of some scale and as such this addition would not appear disproportionate. Also, the fact that it would be stepped down slightly from the existing ridge height and would be less than full width would mean that it would reflect the variation in size seen within the main components of this complex. Overall my view is that the proposal would not undermine the characteristic qualities of the host buildings.
7. The Council refers to the appeal site being a non-designated heritage asset. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states that local planning authorities may identify non-designated heritage assets. These are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which are not formally

designated heritage assets.¹ However, in this particular case no evidence that the Council has identified these buildings as a non-designated heritage asset has been presented.

8. Turning to the effect of this scheme on the Oldbury Conservation Area which covers most of this rural village, I note that these buildings are located on its western edge. The significance of the Conservation Area derives from the eclectic and dispersed mix of dwellings which are seen against the backdrop of surrounding rural views. The northern section of the barn complex and high stone wall associated with Manor Rise forms the boundary with Manor Lane. As this is a narrow single track road bound by mature landscaping Manor Court itself is to a large degree screened from the wider Conservation Area. As such there would be limited visibility of the proposed addition from either Manor Farm Lane or the B4363 to the south. It would therefore not damage the character or appearance of the Oldbury Conservation Area.
9. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the host buildings and that it would preserve the character and appearance of the Oldbury Conservation Area. In reaching this conclusion I am satisfied that this scheme would not conflict with the requirements of the Shropshire Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2011 Policies CS6 and CS17, or the Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development Plan 2015 Policies MD2 and MD13. Taken together these policy provisions require high quality design that conserves the historic environment, taking into consideration local context and character, whilst also embracing opportunities for contemporary design solutions which take reference from and reinforce local characteristics.

Conditions

10. I have had regard to the conditions suggested by the Council which I have amended in part with reference to the PPG and in the interests of precision and enforceability. I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawings as this provides certainty. Conditions relating to materials and detailed design are required in the interests of the character and appearance of the building. These conditions need to be discharged before work commences on site as they are fundamental to a satisfactory scheme. Finally, a condition relating to the implementation of the Great Crested Newt Method Statement is required to ensure compliance with requirements relating to this protected species.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

AJ Mageean

INSPECTOR

¹ National Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 039 Reference ID: 18a-039-20140306