
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 September 2019

by G Pannell BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7th October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/K2610/W/19/3232142

Cherry Tree Farm, The Green, Postwick, Norwich NR13 5DP

- 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 Nick Hood against the decision of Broadland District Council.
 - The application Ref 20190081, dated 16 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 13 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is conversion of disused farm dairy to 2 residential dwellings.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the conversion of a disused farm dairy to 2 residential dwellings at Cherry Tree Farm, The Green, Postwick, Norwich NR13 5DP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20190081, dated 16 January 2019, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions set out in the attached schedule.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the area.

Procedural Matter

3. I have sought confirmation from the parties as to the plans upon which the decision was taken, but I have not received any reply. However, I have based my decision on the amended plan 291-P-003 Rev 1 which was received by the Council prior to any decision being taken and therefore I do not consider this will result in any prejudice to either party.
4. As part of the appeal the appellant submitted additional landscaping details, which I have not considered as part of this appeal as I consider that the level of detail proposed should be subject to discussion and consultation with the Council and their advisors.

Reasons

5. Cherry Tree Farm is an existing farmstead, which comprises a thatched farmhouse, a pair of converted thatched barns (Cherry Tree Barn West and Cherry Tree Barn East) and the former dairy building. The buildings are all in good decorative order and together form a cohesive and attractive group of buildings which, whilst not listed, are of sufficient architectural merit to warrant consideration as non-designated heritage assets. There are also a number of

- newer agricultural buildings on the site, of particular prominence is an open sided barn, sited in front of the existing dairy.
6. The dairy is visible from the road and given the level of decorative order has the appearance of a converted domestic building. The site is subdivided by a close boarded fence which runs along the existing driveway of Cherry Tree Barn West, which detracts from the open rural setting. Post and rail fencing and hedging, with some trees, defines the rear boundary of Cherry Tree Barn West and softens the appearance of the former dairy when viewed across the access road. A brick wall runs along the road towards the thatched barns.
 7. The site is relatively open and the existing adjacent farmyard, with its extensive concrete apron and modern agricultural barns detracts from the setting of the traditional buildings beyond, albeit the general appearance is agricultural in nature. The defined red line as shown on drawing no. 291-P-001 subdivides the existing open sided agricultural building and this is proposed to be removed as part of the application to provide parking areas and garden for the proposed dwellings. I consider that the removal of this building would improve the setting of the former dairy building and lead to an enhancement to the wider character and appearance of the area. This is a significant benefit of the scheme.
 8. The plans submitted with the application show that the site can adequately accommodate an appropriate level of amenity space and parking. I am satisfied that appropriate boundary treatment and landscaping to enable the subdivision of the site with the associated parking areas can be dealt with by a landscaping condition.
 9. The existing farmstead has already been altered and sub-divided as a result of the conversion of Cherry Tree Barn East and West and I consider that the removal of the existing open sided agricultural building and the conversion of the dairy building would enhance the immediate setting of the group of buildings which once formed part of Cherry Tree Farm and the wider area.
 10. The proposal involves the conversion of the dairy into two dwellings. The building, constructed of brick, comprises a large open area with two small store rooms at either end. An internal inspection of the building revealed that a first floor and stairs had been inserted into the main part of the building, although this is not shown on drawing 291-P-002 (Existing Plans and Elevations).
 11. Although the building is relatively open, I do not consider that the insertion of partition walls to facilitate the proposed conversion would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the building, as the inside of the building is fairly unremarkable and unlike a timber framed barn does not require elements of the internal structure to remain exposed.
 12. Externally the proposal includes the insertion of a number of new openings, and a number of these utilise existing openings in the building. Those which have been inserted on the east elevation have been done with sympathy to the existing building, by matching the size and scale of the openings where possible. I consider that the proposed alterations to the east elevation, would not detract from the overall character and appearance of the building.
 13. The proposed new openings within the west elevation, whilst less successful in how they utilise the existing openings, would introduce a pattern of uniformity

which would not detract from the overall appearance of the building. In addition a number of rooflights are proposed within the east elevation, as this elevation is not visible from outside the site I do not consider these would be unduly harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

14. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the area. It would comply with Policies 1 and 2 of the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk 2014 which seek to ensure development promotes sustainability (Policy 1) and is of an appropriate design having regard to local distinctiveness (Policy 2). In addition it would not conflict with Policies GC3, GC4 and EN2 of the Broadland District Council Development Management DPD 2015 which ensure conversions of buildings would lead to an enhancement of its immediate setting (GC3), are of an appropriate design (GC4) and protect the character of the area (EN2).
15. The development would also be in accordance with paragraph 79 of the Framework which allows for the reuse of redundant buildings, where its immediate setting is enhanced and paragraph 127 which ensures developments are sympathetic to local character and history.

Conditions

16. The Council have not provided me with a list of suggested conditions, however I have had regard to those suggested by consultees during the application process. I have considered these in light of the Planning Practice Guide and the tests of the Framework and where necessary amended them for clarity. I have also sought confirmation from the appellant in order to impose pre-commencement conditions.
17. In addition to the standard implementation condition it is necessary, for the avoidance of doubt, to define the plans with which the scheme should accord. I consider that a condition to agree a scheme of landscaping, would also be necessary in this case given the lack of detail on the submitted plans.
18. I have also imposed a condition requiring further information to be submitted in relation to the ecological mitigation which is recommended within the Preliminary Roost Assessment and Bat Surveys and to ensure that it is implemented as approved.
19. In order to ensure an appropriate level of parking provision, I have imposed a condition requiring the parking space to be provided prior to occupation of the dwelling and retained for the life of the development. I have not found it necessary to impose a condition requiring the existing access to be widened and improved due to its existing standard which would be sufficient to serve the development.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

G. Pannell

INSPECTOR

Conditions Schedule

- 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 and documents: 291 P001 Site/Location Plan, 291 P002 Existing Plans, 291 P003 Rev 1 Proposed Plans and Elevations, Preliminary Roost Assessment and Bat Surveys, The Ecology Consultancy Sept 2018.
- 3) No dwelling shall be occupied until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with drawing no. 291-P-003 for the parking of vehicles and that space shall thereafter be kept available at all times for the parking of vehicles.
- 4) No development shall commence until details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include:
 - a statement setting out the design objectives and how these will be delivered;
 - earthworks showing existing and proposed finished levels or contours;
 - means of enclosure and retaining structures;
 - boundary treatments;
 - vehicle parking layouts;
 - hard surfacing materials;
 - lighting, floodlighting and CCTV;
 - an implementation programme.

The landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details before any part of the development is first occupied in accordance with the agreed implementation programme. The completed scheme shall be managed and/or maintained in accordance with an approved scheme of management and/or maintenance.

- 5) Prior to the commencement of development, details of mitigation and conservation measures as recommended in the Preliminary Roost Assessment and Bat Surveys, The Ecology Consultancy Sept 2018 and a timetable for their implementation, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These shall be provided in their entirety in accordance with the agreed timetable and thereafter shall be retained.