



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 10 January 2020

by J Somers BSocSci (Planning) MA (HEC) MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 24th January 2020

Appeal A: APP/J4423/W/19/3235444

Hole in the Wall Farm, David Lane, Sheffield S10 4PH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA) against a refusal to grant planning permission under section 73 of the TCPA for the development of land without complying with conditions subject to which a previous planning permission was granted.
 - The appeal is made by Mr David Laver against the decision of Sheffield City Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01295/FUL, dated 25 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 20 May 2019.
 - The application sought alterations and conversion of barn to a three-bedroom dwelling including demolition of stable block, extension to barn and construction of a subterranean garage ancillary to the existing Farm House without complying with a condition attached to permission Ref 18/02114/FUL, dated 21 December 2018.
 - The Condition in dispute is No 2 which states that: The development must be carried out in complete accordance with the following approved documents: Drawing 183/01 (02) 005 Rev B Proposed Site Plan and Roof Plan; Drawing 183/01 (02) 006 Rev B Proposed Elevations; and Drawing 183/01 (02) 007 Rev B Proposed Elevations and Building Plans.
 - The reason given for the condition is: In order to define the permission.
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Appeal B: APP/J4423/Y/19/3235450

Hole in the Wall Farm, David Lane, Sheffield S10 4PH

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (PLBCA) against a refusal to grant listed building consent under section 19 of the PLBCA for works without complying with conditions subject to which a previous Listed Building Consent was granted.
 - The appeal is made by Mr David Laver against the decision of Sheffield City Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01065/LBC, dated 25 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 20 May 2019.
 - The application sought alterations and conversion of barn to a three-bedroom dwelling including demolition of stable block, extension to barn and construction of a subterranean garage ancillary to the existing Farm House without complying with a condition attached to permission Ref 18/02115/LBC, dated 21 December 2018
 - The Condition in dispute is No 2 which states that: The development must be carried out in complete accordance with the following approved documents: Drawing 183/01 (02) 005 Rev B Proposed Site Plan and Roof Plan; Drawing 183/01 (02) 006 Rev B Proposed Elevations; and Drawing 183/01 (02) 007 Rev B Proposed Elevations and Building Plans.
 - The reason given for the condition is: In order to define the permission.
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Decisions

Appeal A:

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B:

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters – Both Appeals

3. This decision deals with a planning appeal under S78 of the TCPA (Appeal A) and a listed building consent appeal under S20 of the PLBCA (Appeal B). Whilst both appeals are to be considered under these separate processes, to avoid repetition and for the avoidance of doubt, I have dealt with both decisions within this single letter.

Background and Main Issues – Both Appeals

4. Planning permission and Listed Building Consent have been granted to allow conversion of one of the barns into a dwelling, as well as demolitions and a subterranean garage. Whilst the reason for the condition is not disputed, the focus of both appeals concerns amended plans which aim to supersede approved plans. The amendments would allow for the installation of a window to the gable end of the existing barn which is proposed to be converted into a separate dwelling.
5. The main issues in both appeals are the effect caused by varying the condition to allow a window to the gable of the barn would have on:
 - the significance of the Grade II listing known as 'Hole In Wall Farmhouse and Adjoining Barns and Stables,' including the setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which the building possesses; and
 - the character and appearance of the area, including the Area of High Landscape Value, and Area of Special Character.

Reasons – Both Appeals

6. Sections 16 (2) and 66 of the PLCBA prescribes a duty upon a decision maker to give special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building and any features of architectural or historic interest it possesses, including its setting.
7. The appeal site is a historic barn which adjoins the edge of a group of historic agricultural buildings arranged around an inverted U-shape which looks across the Mayfield Valley to the south. Whilst the group of buildings which make up the farmstead have significance, the part of the structure that relates to this appeal also has individual importance. This predominantly concerns the remaining historic fabric, the simple and functional construction, the quality of the materials and craftsmanship and how they relate to the former form and function of a group of largely unaltered agricultural buildings. These buildings are experienced together as a historic farmstead and are valuable in allowing an understanding of the various agricultural operations, functions and relationships between the land and associated buildings. Additionally, the setting of the appeal site is quite large given its elevated and prominent position and appearance within the wider landscape.

8. According to the appellant, the proposed window to the gable end would have similar proportions to a doorway, with a frameless punched opening. The opening would be positioned off-centre to the right of the gable end which would result in a loss of historic stonework.
9. As a result of the barn's simple and functional nature, care needs to be taken during conversion works in order to avoid excessive domestication of the building and to ensure they reflect its simple and functional nature, which extends to fenestration and key elevations. This approach is reflected in Historic England Guidance on traditional farm buildings which seeks that developments "*Retain existing historic openings and minimise alterations to prominent and significant external elevations, through careful attention to internal planning and how and where to introduce or borrow light. The size, proportion and detail of window and door design and materials has a major impact on overall appearance.*"¹
10. The gable of this barn is a considerably prominent facade, being elevated at this point and having panoramic views to the surrounding Mayfield Valley and visible within the surrounding landscape. The gable end is also visible from long distance viewpoints and from the Public Right of Way (PROW) which leads through the countryside nearby.
11. Whilst I acknowledge the intention that the window is to '*appear as a modern-day ventilation hole or hayloft opening,*' I am not convinced by this approach. The proposed window, which would be the size of a doorway, would not reflect the simplistic and traditional nature of the barn building and would overcomplicate the design by the placement of glazing which would be uncharacteristic and inauthentic to this particular historic building. There are also considerations regarding the reflectiveness of the glazing to this gable end and any associated lighting and light spillage. In this case the lighting and light spillage would be suspended above ground level and give an awkward and inauthentic appearance to this agricultural building. This would result in the over-domestication of the barn, causing detrimental effects to the historic and architectural interest of the historic building.
12. It is clear to me that the amendments proposed to the approved plans would fail to preserve the listed building and some of the features of architectural or historic interest it possesses, the desirability of which is judged a matter of considerable importance and weight by the Courts and is contrary to the expectations of s16 (2) and s66 of the PLBCA. As per paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework), this harm is afforded considerable importance and weight.
13. Although serious, the harm to the heritage assets as a result of the proposed development in this case would be '*less than substantial,*' within the meaning of the term in paragraph 196 of the Framework. Paragraph 194 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 196 requires that, where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
14. In relation to this particular installation, the appellant states that there are no public benefits other than to facilitate the improved usability of the barn to a

¹ Historic England (2015), Farmstead Assessment Framework, Page 11

residential dwelling. However, it is also mentioned that the conversion scheme, when considered as a whole, would provide an efficient re-use of an underused building for a dwelling; as well as ensuring that, in the long term, the heritage asset could be conserved and put to a viable use that would ensure its longevity.

15. The building would still be able to be re-used for housing without the window and the long term conservation and reuse of a heritage asset would be ensured. There is already a large opening and a smaller opening to the side wall of the proposed living space which appears to provide adequate natural light for usability of this space. I have not been presented with any substantive evidence on how the proposed window would further facilitate the usability of the barn to a level that would demonstrably outweigh the harm to the designated heritage asset.
16. Overall, I therefore find that there would be insufficient public benefit to offset the identified harm and the development does not accord with the Framework. I consequently conclude that, in both cases, varying the condition to allow a window to the gable of the barn would fail to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the grade II listed building, to which I am required to have special regard and pay special attention by the PLBCA. The development would also conflict with the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan 1998 (UDP) Saved Policy BE19 which seeks that changes of use and alterations preserve the character and appearance of a building, including its setting.

Character and appearance

17. The gable end of the barn is elevated and very prominent within the surrounding rural landscape which consists of panoramic views to hills and woods as part of a moorland landscape of the Peak District National Park. A PROW runs through the open countryside which lies approximately 200 metres from the appeal site. Along this PROW, a tranquil experience is gained with views towards the scattered nature of traditional buildings which are present which take upon traditional forms and vernacular. These buildings appear quite functional and simple in nature with limited openings which reflects their form and function within this rural setting.
18. In contrast, the proposed window would be overly large and sit uncomfortably against the traditional and functional form of the barn. Whilst I appreciate that the existing building has consent to be converted into a dwelling and this will no doubt change the character of the site, the additional window to the gable end would accentuate this domestication of the site to an unacceptable degree. This, together with the increased reflectiveness and light spillage from the gable end, would add to the distraction caused from this rural experience to the detriment of the Area of Landscape Value and Area of Special Character.
19. The scheme would therefore be contrary to UPD Saved Policies: BE15 (which seeks that to resist development which would affect areas of special character); BE19 (which seeks that changes of use and alterations preserve the character and appearance of a building, including its setting) and GE8 (which seeks that development must protect and wherever appropriate, enhance the appearance and character of Areas of High Landscape Value).

Conclusion – Both Appeals

20. In conclusion, on the basis of what I saw on my site visit and the evidence before me, the proposal would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape. The proposal would also cause less than substantial harm to the architectural and historic interest of the listed building, and would not preserve the features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess and to which Sections 16(2) and 66 of the PLBCA requires special regard to be paid. The benefits put forward for the proposal would not outweigh the harm caused.
21. For the reasons given above, both appeals are dismissed.

J Somers

INSPECTOR