



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 February 2020

by S R G Baird BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25th March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/D/19/3242952

Knowles House Farm, Hollin Lane, Sutton, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK11 0HR

- 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 D Chell against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
 - The application Ref 19/2400M, dated 14 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 1 October 2019.
 - The development proposed is the conversion of an attached single-storey outbuilding to ancillary domestic use and the construction of single-storey detached ancillary accommodation.
-

Preliminary Matter

1. The application was submitted using the Council's, "Householder Application for Planning Permission for works or extension to a dwelling". The decision notice notes that the Council does not consider it appropriate to deal with the conversion and extension elements of this scheme as a Householder Application. That said the Council has gone on to consider the planning merits of the proposal and issue a decision. Accordingly, I shall deal with the proposal based on the description above.

Decision

2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the conversion of an attached single-storey outbuilding to ancillary domestic use and the construction of single-storey detached ancillary accommodation at Knowles House Farm, Hollin Lane, Sutton, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK11 0HR in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/2400M, dated 14 May 2019, 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 plans; KHF-LP; KHF-01; KHF-02, KHF-03, KHF-09 Rev A; KHF-10 Rev A; KHF-11 and KHF-12;
 - 3) no development shall commence until details/samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extensions 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 details/samples.

Background to the Main Issue

3. The proposal has 2 parts, the first is the conversion and extension of an existing attached building to extend the existing kitchen and to create an enclosed seating area and a swimming pool. The second part is the creation of a detached home office and oil store set into a bank to the rear of the dwelling. Knowles House Farm is located within the Green Belt where, inappropriate development is considered harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The construction of new buildings is inappropriate development except for the extension or alteration of a building if it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Here, the Council consider that the scale of the proposed conversion and the creation of the sunken building would not result in a disproportionate extension to the original building and would not fall within the definition of inappropriate development. I have no reason to disagree with that conclusion.
4. The proposed home office and oil store would be sunk into an existing embankment, with the front elevation finished in stone and flanked either side by stone retaining walls. The Council consider this part of the proposal would have a limited impact on the character of the surrounding area and would have a satisfactory appearance. I have no reason to disagree with that conclusion. As such this part of the proposal would not conflict with the objectives of the development plan regarding good design.

Main Issue

5. The effect of the proposed conversion and extension of the outbuilding on the character and appearance of the dwelling and attached outbuilding.

Reasons

6. Development plan¹ policy seeks to ensure that a proposal to alter and extend a building should, amongst other things, respect the architectural features of the building. The National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) also places emphasis on achieving good design.
7. Regarding the conversion of the outbuilding, the Council refer to Local Plan Policy DC2 in terms of the outbuilding having a traditional agrarian character and Chapter 3 of Historic England's (HE) advice on Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings, which places importance on respecting the architectural and historical interest of existing farm buildings including their distinctive features. HE's advice has to be taken in context and the advice contained in Chapter 3 follows on from assessing the significance and sensitivity of a building to change. Other than being a simple, former agricultural outbuilding, the building appears to have no significant historic or landscape significance outside of its own curtilage. In this context, it is not a building that is sensitive to change.
8. The proposed extension, with a depth of some 0.85m and a width of some 8.7m, compared to the overall width of the dwelling/outbuilding at some 25m would be modest. Catslide roof extensions to barns are a well-used design solution. Indeed, the adjoining property, a converted barn, has a full width

¹ Policies SE 1 & SD 2 of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy 2010-2030 and Policy DC2 of the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan.

catslide roof extension to the front featuring contemporary window openings. The full glazing of the roof and front elevation of the proposed extension and the insertion of bifold doors would be contemporary additions. However, the way the glazed areas are expressed on the submitted plans over-emphasise the potential visual impact of these features and suggests a greater impact than would be the case. Given the low sensitivity to change and the visually and physically enclosed nature of the rear of the dwelling, the works would form a high-quality contemporary addition to the existing dwelling. When viewed in the round, the proposed works would not unacceptably affect the overall character and appearance of Knowles House Farm.

Other Considerations

9. Access to Knowles House Farm is via a private shared laneway. Whilst I appreciate the concerns of others who use the lane, this is a private matter between the respective owners and not a matter for my consideration as part of a planning appeal.

Conclusions

10. For the above reasons, the proposed extensions would not unacceptably affect the character and appearance of the host building and would not conflict with the objectives of development and national planning policy taken as a whole. Accordingly, having taken all other matters into consideration, this appeal is allowed.

Conditions

11. Conditions relating to the submission of finishing materials for approval and specifying the approved plans are reasonable and necessary in the interests of appearance and to provide certainty.

George Baird

Inspector