
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 August 2020

by Alison Partington BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/W/20/3248871

**The Sycamore, 2 Bradeley Hall Farm, Bradeley Hall Road, Haslington
CW1 5HR**

- 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 Mrs Julie Wootton against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
 - The application Ref 19/5532N, dated 28 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 28 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is window and door's replacement.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The appeal form indicates that the appeal results from the Council's decision to refuse to approve a matter required by a condition on a previous planning application. However, from the application form and decision notice it is clear that the appeal results from the Council refusing planning permission for the development. I have determined the appeal on this basis.
3. The appeal form also indicates that the site lies in the Green Belt. The same is not indicated on the Council's questionnaire, nor is there any reference to it being in the Green Belt in the Council's other evidence. In any case, given the nature of the proposed development whether the property lies in the Green Belt or not would not be material to my decision.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in the appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the adjoining units.

Reasons

5. The appeal property forms part of a barn conversion complex of 7 dwellings. In order to protect the character and appearance of the building, a condition was placed on the original permission¹ for the conversion of the barn complex to control the details of the new windows and doors and any future replacements. This is supported by the *Extensions and Householder Development Supplementary Planning Document (adopted July 2008)* (SPD) which indicates

¹ Application Reference P05/1385 – condition 5

that in barn conversions particular care must be taken with the choice of materials.

6. Although within the complex there are a number of different types of windows, including round windows, top hung and side hung windows of various sizes, consistency is created within the complex by the common use of timber for the windows and doors and their cream colour. This also prevents the buildings having an overly domesticated appearance and so retains the rural character of the former barns.
7. It is proposed to replace all the current timber windows and doors on the host property with uPVC which would have a painted finish to match the cream found on the other dwellings in the complex. These would replicate the style of opening found in the existing windows. However, the thicker frames that result from uPVC means that the windows and doors would only have a superficial visual approximation of the original ones and means they would not sit comfortably with the agricultural character of the building.
8. The appellant has highlighted that other properties have replaced windows and doors using various materials and colours and that the adjacent farmhouse also has some uPVC windows. However, I observed that the majority of the windows and doors within the barn complex were still timber and were cream in colour. As such, there remains a strong consistency and the complex still retains much of its former agricultural character. The one property I saw where some of the windows and doors had been replaced with uPVC illustrated the fact that the much thicker uPVC frames are out of keeping on a former agricultural barn. As such, it does not set a precedent to be followed.
9. Although the farmhouse is close to the barn complex, it is clearly separated from it by a tall boundary wall and by having its own access. Furthermore, as a building that has always had a domestic character it does not have the same sensitivity in relation to the choice of materials.
10. In support of the appeal my attention has also be drawn to 4 other barn conversions where it is stated uPVC windows have been allowed. I do not know the circumstances that led to these being considered acceptable, but I note that none of them are in the immediate area. In particular, as they all appear to pre-date the adoption of the *Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy* (CELPS) in July 2017, I do not know the development plan policies that applied at the time they were considered. Moreover, from the evidence before me, it appears they are all standalone buildings not part of a complex of barn conversions. As such, they do not represent a direct parallel to the appeal scheme.
11. Overall, I consider that the proposed development would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the host property and the adjoining units. It would therefore be contrary to Policies SD2, SE1 and SE7 of the CELPS which require development to have a high quality of design that reinforces local distinctiveness and contributes positively to the character and identity of the area and the historic and built environment.
12. The appellant has highlighted that other properties have erected garden sheds and raised decking areas without seeking permission, contrary to another of the conditions on the original permission. However, this is not a matter before me at this appeal and does not justify the appeal proposal.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

Alison Partington

INSPECTOR