



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 January 2021

by Alison Partington BA(Hons), MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27th January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/H1033/D/20/3261517

Barn Cottage, Ashbourne Lane, Chapel-En-Le-Frith, HIGH PEAK, SK23 9UF

- 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 R Staley against the decision of High Peak Borough Council.
 - The application Ref HPK/2020/0093, dated 11 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 28 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is a 2 storey side extension, single storey rear extension and alteration of an existing opening to provide patio doors.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of the development given on the appeal form does not refer to the 2 storey side extension, simply the rear extension and alterations of an existing opening. It is clear from the appellant's statement that this was simply a typographical error rather than an indication that this part of the proposal should not form part of the appeal. Therefore, I have determined the appeal on the basis it was applied for and as described in the banner heading above.
3. The appellant has argued that the condition imposed removing permitted development rights when the barn was originally converted in 1988 is no longer reasonable or necessary. However, this appeal is made against the refusal of planning permission for extensions and alteration to the property and not a refusal of an application to vary a condition. As such, whether that condition is reasonable or necessary is not a matter that is before me in this appeal.

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 surrounding landscape.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a rectangular 2 storey stone barn that has previously been converted for residential purposes – first as a holiday let and now as a dwelling. Together with the two neighbouring properties, it forms a small collection of buildings and trees on a hillside surrounded by grazing land. As a 19th century outfarm the Council consider the building to be a non-designated heritage asset.
6. Advice on converting traditional farm buildings is found in both the *Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document (adopted March 2006)* (SPD) and

the *High Peak Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (adopted February 2018)* (DG). These indicate that to maintain their simple functional form additional development and extensions to traditional farm buildings should be avoided. However, the DG suggests that when they are necessary it may be possible to bring about a new understanding of historic buildings by making a clear distinction between what is old and new.

7. The existing dwelling retains the simple form of a traditional barn. A number of windows were added when it was converted to residential use including to one gable end which traditionally would have been solid. Whilst some of these are more sympathetic additions than others, nonetheless, the irregular shape and size of windows on the ground floor and the high solid to void ratio means the building retains its agricultural character. This character is clearly discernible and differentiates the property from the neighbouring dwellings when it is seen in conjunction with them from the nearby footpath.
8. The proposed two storey side extension would retain the linear form of the former barn. It would be set down from the ridge line of the barn and set back from the front elevation and so in terms of its scale and mass would be a subordinate addition to the barn. The front elevation would contain a single window at ground floor level whose design and proportions would reflect the one at the other end of the front elevation, and the rear elevation would contain no windows. This would strengthen the high solid to void character of the building.
9. However, the gable end would contain wide floor to ceiling windows on both the ground and first floor. In what would traditionally have been a solid gable this amount of glazing would be an incongruous feature that would not be sympathetic to the character of the building. Whilst the existing gable contains 4 windows, 3 of these are very small. As such, I do not agree that at present this gable has a cluttered or confused appearance. Moreover, the gable currently has a high solid to void ratio that would not be maintained in the appeal scheme.
10. The appellant suggest that the gable would be seen as a contemporary addition in line with the design approach supported in the DG. However, the materials and design of the rest of the extension is traditional, not contemporary and so a clear distinction between old and new would not be achieved. In addition, as noted by the Council the large amount of glazing would also have the potential to give rise to light pollution at night, which would not be the case from the existing windows due to their small size.
11. Although the rear extension would be small, and clearly subordinate in size to the main building, it would not respect the linear form of the building and would detract from its simple agricultural form. It would thus be an unsympathetic addition to the host property. The patio doors proposed on the rear elevation would be significantly larger than any other window on the property and would serve to increase the domestic appearance of the building. Moreover, I am not persuaded that this proposed alteration would have any significant impact on the amount of electricity used by the property.
12. The building is in a secluded location and visibility of it is limited. In particular, the alterations and extensions to the rear would not be seen from the public domain. Nevertheless, the front elevation can be seen from some parts of the nearby footpath network, especially in winter when screening from the

surrounding trees is more limited. The side extension would be seen in these views. Nevertheless, the limited visibility from the public domain does not overcome the harm the proposal would cause to the character and appearance of the host property and the landscape in which it is situated. However, whilst I note the Council's comments about the visibility of the residential activity around the dwelling, I am satisfied that this would not be significantly increased by the extensions.

13. My attention was drawn to the large rear extension on the adjacent Higher Eaves Farm. It was highlighted that this contains large areas of glazing and lies immediately adjacent to the public footpath. However, this property was originally a farmhouse and so has always had a domestic character. As such it has less sensitivity to change and does not represent a direct parallel to the appeal scheme.
14. Consequently, I consider that the proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding landscape. Accordingly, it would conflict with Policies S1, EQ2, EQ3, EQ6 and EQ7 of the *High Peak Local Plan (adopted April 2016)* which require developments to have a high quality of design that protects and enhances the natural and historic environment and the landscape character and that is sympathetic to and minimises harm to heritage assets.

Other Matters

15. It has been highlighted that the Council have approved an extension to a barn with large amounts of glazing elsewhere in the borough. Be that as it may, I do not know the precise planning and locational circumstances that led to that decision. In any case, I have considered the proposal before me on its own merits and based on its particular circumstances and setting.

Conclusion

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

Alison Partington

INSPECTOR