



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 February 2021

by Helen B Hockenhull BA (Hons) B. PI MRTPI

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

Decision date: 15 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/C2708/D/20/3262410

Blossom Barn, Birkwith Lane, Low Bentham, Lancaster LA2 7DF

- 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 and Mrs Carr against the decision of Craven District Council.
 - The application Ref 2020/21749/HH, dated 17 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is a first-floor bedroom extension and single storey side extension to the house and swimming pool extension to rear of garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the first-floor bedroom extension. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to the single storey side extension to the house and swimming pool extension to rear of garage and planning permission is granted for the single storey side extension to house and swimming pool extension to rear of garage at Blossom Barn, Birkwith Lane, Low Bentham, Lancaster LA2 7DF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2020/21749/HH, dated 17 June 2020, and the plans submitted with it, so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted and 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 materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling.

Reasons

3. The appeal property forms a semi-detached two storey converted barn located in the open countryside. It forms part of a complex of 6 dwellings formed from a range of converted agricultural buildings. The site is accessed from a driveway off Birkwith Lane, Low Bentham. The dwelling is constructed in coursed stone with a slate roof and timber window and door openings and retains its rural character. There is a detached single storey garage to the east of the dwelling with an attached timber store.

4. It is proposed to construct a first-floor bedroom extension, a single storey side extension and a swimming pool extension to the rear of the garage. The Council raises concern about the first-floor bedroom extension only. They have found the other elements of the proposal to be acceptable in terms of scale, design, materials and visual impact. I have no reason to disagree with this assessment.
5. Taken as a whole, the existing building retains the appearance of a converted agricultural building. Whilst the rear elevation is not symmetrical, it has a balanced appearance with cat slide roofs at both east and west ends either side of a centrally positioned conservatory.
6. The proposed first-floor gable extension would be formed by building above the existing sitting room, removing the eastern cat slide roof and replacing it with a two-storey gable. The extension would be the same height as the ridge of the existing dwelling. The loss of the cat slide roof on one side would unbalance the buildings appearance. It would provide an incongruous addition to this former agricultural building, out of keeping with the original form and character of both the appeal building and the wider group of former farm buildings.
7. The full height windows proposed would contrast with the proportions of the existing window openings in the building, having a negative impact on the visual amenity of the building. The installation of bifold doors at ground floor would introduce a modern feature to a traditional rural building, providing a discordant addition eroding its traditional character.
8. The fact that the rear elevation of the building is not visible from public land and that the character of the complex is more readily appreciated from the central yard, does not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the host building.
9. I acknowledge that the existing conservatory extension on the rear elevation consists of a fully glazed gable. However, this is modest in size and infills a small recess in the building. Its central position and its construction in painted timber to match the other windows in the building results in a sympathetic structure which can be clearly read as an addition to the building.
10. I acknowledge that the proposed swimming pool extension includes a large south facing gable. Whilst the gable extension would be out of character with the traditional agricultural buildings in the complex, the garage is a separate outbuilding of recent construction. In this context, a gable on the rear elevation would not be inappropriate.
11. In summary, the proposed single storey side extension and swimming pool extension to the rear of the garage would be acceptable, in compliance with Policy ENV3 of the Craven Local Plan 2019 and section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which seek to promote good design, respecting the form of existing and surrounding buildings. However, the proposed first floor bedroom extension would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host building, contrary to the above policies.

12. In these circumstances it is open to me to consider a split decision. As the first-floor extension is physically and functionally severable, I consider that the appeal should succeed in relation to the single storey side extension and swimming pool extension to the rear of the garage but fail in regard to the first floor extension.

Conditions

13. I have had regard to the conditions suggested by the Council in light of the Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. In addition to the standard timeframe condition, I impose a condition requiring materials to match that of the existing dwelling in the interests of the character and appearance of the dwelling. I do not impose a condition specifying relevant plans as progressing the works in accordance with the submitted plans is part of the formal decision above.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons outlined, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should fail in respect of the first-floor bedroom extension, but succeed in respect of the single storey side extension to the house and the swimming pool extension to rear of garage. A split decision is therefore issued.

Helen Hockenhull

INSPECTOR