



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 2 February 2021

by R J Jackson BA MPhil DMS MRTPI MCMI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 February 2021

Appeal A

Ref: APP/N0410/W/20/3251707

Granary, Denham Court Farm, Village Road, Denham UB9 5BG

- 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 Radiate Global International Ltd against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council - South Bucks Area
 - The application Ref PL/19/0133/FA, dated 4 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 30 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is single storey front extension to provide glazed link to garage. Single storey side extension.
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Appeal B

Ref: APP/N0410/Y/20/3251706

Granary, Denham Court Farm, Village Road, Denham UB9 5BG

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Radiate Global International Ltd against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council - South Bucks Area
 - The application Ref PL/19/0134/HB, dated 4 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 30 March 2020.
 - The works proposed are single storey front extension to provide glazed link to garage. Single storey side extension.
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Decisions

Appeal A

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

3. I undertook this site visit at the same time as those relating to a number of other appeals¹ concerning this and other buildings at Denham Court Farm. These other appeals are the subject of separate decision letters.
4. In April 2020 local government was re-organised in this area. Although the application was made to and the decision made by South Bucks District Council

¹ APP/N0410/Y/20/3251702, /Y/20/3251703, /W/20/3251704, /W/20/3254962 & /Y/20/3254967

Buckinghamshire Council is now the local planning authority and the decision falls as if made by that Council.

5. During the consideration of the application, amended plans were submitted to the Council. However, these amended plans were subsequently withdrawn so the applications as determined by the Council were as originally submitted. As interested parties will have been consulted on the original proposals there would be no injustice if I was to make my decisions based on those original plans too.
6. The name of the building on the listing description of the appeal building is "Denham Court Farmhouse Barn to South East of Farmhouse" but is identified as "The Granary". I will use this latter title for simplicity.
7. The proposals are in two discrete elements. One of these, the glazed link which would join The Granary to the adjoining garage building would enclose a staircase and thus had floors on two storeys. The Council described the whole development on the decision notice as "single storey extensions". The descriptions used in the headings are taken from the applications form and I consider they adequately describe the proposals.

Main Issues

8. In respect of Appeal A, although the site lies in the Green Belt it is agreed between the parties that the proposal would represent not inappropriate development on the basis that it would not result in disproportionate extensions over and above the size of the original building. I have no reason to disagree on this point.
9. The main issues for Appeal A are:
 - (i) whether the proposal would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed Granary and its setting;
 - (ii) the effect on the settings of Denham Court Farmhouse Barn and Denham Farmhouse, both Grade II listed buildings; and
 - (iii) the effect on the Denham Conservation Area.
10. The main issue for Appeal B is whether the proposal would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed Granary and its setting.
11. As the first main issue in respect of Appeal A and that of Appeal B are effectively the same, I will consider them together and will have special regard to Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) as appropriate. I will pay special attention to Section 72(1) of the same Act in respect of the third main issue in relation to Appeal A.

Reasons

The effect on The Granary as a listed building

12. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) defines the significance of a heritage asset as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The national Planning

Practice Guidance (the PPG) also notes² that 'significance' derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

13. Paragraph 193 of the Framework indicates that great weight should be given to the conservation of a heritage asset and this is irrespective of the level of harm that may occur. It is also emphasised that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Paragraph 194 of the Framework indicates that any harm to the significance of a heritage asset, or from development within its setting, should require clear and convincing justification.
14. The Granary dates from the seventeenth century and is a timber framed weather boarded structure. It has been converted into a single dwelling having been previously converted into an office, and alterations and extensions have been carried out. For the purposes of these appeals its significance relates to its simple external form and, although not listed for its Group Value, how it makes a positive contribution to the wider farm complex, being the (former) farmyard and buildings around it taken together, through its clear historic agricultural character.
15. In this regard I would disagree with the appellant when it states that the significance of The Granary has been reduced by its conversion, and by the two storey entrance extension. While of lesser import for these appeals the exposed timber frame and internal aisle are readily visible at both ground and first floor, and the two storey entrance allows the original full height of the building to be appreciated. These are important elements of the significance of the building. While some elements have a domestic appearance, and the introduction of a first floor and the glazed two storey element has opened up to view what was previously part of the interior of the building and this has led to some reduction in some significance, the simple large mass of the historic building remains to denote its architectural and historic significance.
16. The proposal is for two extensions, one on either end of The Granary. On the southern end would be an orangery style single storey building on the area of an existing patio. This would have glazed walls above a brick plinth, a tiled 'false' pitched roof and a glazed lantern roof element which would sit above the false pitch. To facilitate the development a small patio area to the side would be created along with steps and brick retaining walls. The existing doors on the southern elevation would be retained to allow access from the main building to the extension.
17. The second element would be located at the other end of the building. This would be more than single storey in that it is to enclose an area utilised for an external stair (a stairway would be created internally) to allow for headroom above the upper landing area. The walls would be glazed in timber framing, although there would be 'timber cladding to base of link' across the whole width of the upper level to create a screen. The gabled tiled roof would be centred on the pitch of the main roof of The Granary. Access to the extension from The Granary would be via an existing doorway which would be retained.
18. The orangery element would introduce a harmful small intricate domestic styled element at a completely different scale to the large mass and volume of The Granary with its agricultural character. The intricate style of the proposed building, made up of a number of elements exemplified by the lantern and

² Reference ID: 18a-006-20190723

repeated elements of the exposed timber framing to the windows and doors, would harmfully contrast with the simplicity of The Granary. In addition, the rooflight would obscure views of the existing first floor window in the south elevation when viewed at an angle from ground level. All of this would lead to harm to The Granary and setting.

19. In respect of the link element, this would introduce a separate roof element that would result in clutter when considered together with the main roof of The Granary and the existing roof of the adjoining garage and workshop block to the north. The fact that the tiled roof would effectively appear as a floating element above the glazed link would only harmfully add to this. The internal timber screens would also appear awkward being only at the upper floor level and would not appear below. Preventing this element by condition would not resolve the wider harm.
20. Further this structure would more positively visually link The Granary and the garage and workshop block. Part of the significance of The Granary is its discrete form which displays its agricultural heritage, and this would be harmed by the introduction of a subservient linking element of the type proposed.
21. That being the case, the proposal would result in harm to the special architectural and historic interest of The Granary. As such it would be contrary to Policies C6 and H11 of the South Bucks District Local Plan which indicate that consent will not be granted for alterations or extensions which would harm the character or appearance of a listed building or its setting and would not harmonise with the existing building in terms of scale, form and design.
22. Within the terms set out in the Framework this would represent less than substantial harm to the significance of The Granary. This should be given considerable importance and weight. That being the case paragraph 196 of the Framework states that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. I will do this in the conclusion section.

Setting of The Denham Court Farmhouse Barn and Denham Farmhouse

23. The Denham Court Farmhouse Barn is located to the north of The Granary and Denham Farmhouse is located on the opposite side of the farm complex. The Denham Court Farmhouse Barn dates from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and is a timber framed weather boarded building. This building is listed for, amongst other matters, its Group Value, and its significance for this appeal relates to its simple external form and its contribution to the farm complex. The significance of Denham Court Farmhouse on the eastern side of the courtyard for these appeals is its form as part of the overall farm complex.
24. Due to the separation and intervening vegetation the proposed orangery would not have an effect on the setting of either of these listed buildings. This would also apply for the link extension on the setting of the Farmhouse.
25. However, the proposed link extension would add built-form and would be easily seen from The Denham Court Farmhouse Barn and the farmyard in views of The Granary and The Denham Court Farmhouse Barn together. The clutter from the roof form discussed above would detract from the setting of The Denham Court Farmhouse Barn. This would lead to harm to the significance of The Denham Court Farmhouse Barn within the wider courtyard. This, in terms

of the Framework, would also represent less than substantial harm, but again should be given considerable importance and weight.

26. Therefore, in respect of The Denham Court Farmhouse Barn the proposal would be contrary to Policies C6 and H11 of the South Bucks Local Plan as set out above.

The effect on the Denham Conservation Area

27. The appeal site lies at the eastern end of the conservation area which extends to include the main village to the north, with Denham Court and Denham Place 'bookending' the village. The significance of the Denham Court farm complex for the conservation area in this appeal relates to the clear reference of the agricultural history from the building forms and its location in one corner of the conservation area.
28. The appellant maintains that neither extension could be seen from outside the site, principally due to the existing walls and fences that surround the site. However, that something cannot be seen is not, of itself, a good reason to allow a harmful development since the legal requirement is to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving the character or appearance of the conservation area, and character is not necessarily formed by something that can only be seen. In any event, the proposal would be able to be seen from certain public viewpoints.
29. Firstly, due to the height of the glazed link this would be seen over the existing boundary wall to Village Road, and through the existing entrance gates. Secondly, when walking along the public right of way to the east of the site, and particularly across the slightly raised bridge over the waterway, the southern end of The Granary and the site of the proposed orangery would be easily seen.
30. As noted above the significance of the Denham Court farm complex for the conservation area relates to the way that the previous agricultural history of the buildings can be readily understood. By introducing a domestic and intricate feature this would harm the contribution that the complex makes to the conservation area by reducing its clear agricultural character and as a bookend. Within the terms of the Framework, this would represent less than substantial harm. Once again, this should be given considerable importance and weight.
31. Therefore, the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the Denham Conservation Area. As such it would be contrary to Policy C1 of the South Bucks Local Plan which indicates that development within a conservation area that fails to preserve or enhance its character or appearance will not be permitted.

Other considerations

32. The appellant has referred to Historic England's publication 'Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings' which indicates that an extension that houses ancillary functions that require a high degree of partition can leave an undivided historic space. However, this quote immediately follows a comment that "Overtly domestic extensions such as ... conservatories are alien in character and can rarely work successfully within the context of historic farm buildings". While these extensions might avoid further and harmful subdivision,

it has not been demonstrated that the accommodation here sought is necessary for the proper, viable functioning of the building. Consequently, I give this benefit in favour of the proposals limited weight.

Conclusion

33. As identified, the proposal would be harmful to the settings and significance of The Granary and The Denham Court Farmhouse Barn and would harm the character and appearance and thus significance of the Denham Conservation Area. In each case, in the terms of the Framework, this would represent less than substantial harm. All of these are designated heritage assets. Paragraph 196 of the Framework indicates that in this scenario this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
34. It has not been asserted that the current use is not viable, and no public benefits have been identified.
35. Consequently, for the reasons given above I conclude that both appeals should be dismissed.

RJ Jackson

INSPECTOR