



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 22 February 2021

by Zoe Raygen Dip URP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th March 2021

Appeal A: APP/A3010/W/20/3261889

Barn 4, Manor Farm, Great North Road, Torworth, Retford, Notts DN22 8NU

- 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 C Cannon (Cannon Developments) against the decision of Bassetlaw District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00552/FUL, dated 11 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 31 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is the extension and conversion of a disused agricultural building to form a 3 bed dwelling.
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Appeal B: APP/A3010/Y/20/3261891

Barn 4, Manor Farm, Great North Road, Torworth, Retford, Notts DN22 8NU

- 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 Mr C Cannon (Cannon Developments) against the decision of Bassetlaw District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00796/LBA, dated 11 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 11 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is the extension and conversion of a disused agricultural building to form a 3 bed dwelling.
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Decision

1. Appeal A is dismissed.
2. Appeal B is dismissed.

Preliminary matter

3. The two appeals concern the same scheme under different, complementary legislation. I have dealt with both appeals together in my reasoning.
4. Planning permission and Listed Building Consent have been granted for the conversion of the appeal building to a residential unit¹. There is no dispute therefore between the parties that the principal of conversion is acceptable. The proposal before me now includes an extension at the northern end of the building, an extension to the east and alterations to the roof. The Council's principal concern relates to the northern extension.

¹ 17/01063/FUL and 17/0804/LBA

5. As the appeals relate to a listed building, I have had special regard to section 16(2) and section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

Main Issue

6. The main issue for both appeals is the effect of the development and works on the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and the setting of nearby listed buildings.

Reasons

Significance

7. Manor Farm is a Grade II listed building within a historic farm complex dating from the nineteenth century. This complex includes several outbuildings including stables, a threshing barn, and the building the subject of this appeal, a former cart shed. There is no dispute that the outbuildings are listed by curtilage association with the listed Manor Farm. In addition, the former cart shed is attached to the historic boundary wall of the farm.
8. The 1885 map supplied by the appellant shows the cart shed was extended to the north right up to the Blacksmith Lane boundary. I saw at my site visit that remnants of that northern extension are visible on site today. It was also adjoined by a larger structure running along the boundary with Blacksmith Lane. By the time of the 1956 map this structure appears to have been replaced with a smaller building sited along Blacksmith Lane.
9. Other than the alterations at the northern end of the building, the cart shed appears to have changed little over time. The eight cartways form a dominant feature reflective of its former use. Most elements of its fabric including a long, rear stone wall which also forms the boundary of the site, side red brick walls and brick pillars and timbers within its roof structure remain. It is not unusual for such buildings to undergo repairs and modifications and to evolve over time. The replacement of what once may have been a tiled roof with corrugated sheets is not untypical of functional, agricultural buildings of this type. Moreover, the changes are not to such an extent that they fundamentally alter the character of the original building or its clear historic relationship with the main farmhouse and other outbuildings, notwithstanding the conversion of two of those outbuildings to residential use.
10. The appellant is of the view that the cart shed is a significant distance away from Manor Farm and is obscured from its setting by the conversion and extension of Barns 1, 2 and 3. However, the distance to Manor Farm has not changed. While there have been alterations to Barns 1 and 2 and Barn 3 is undergoing conversion, the cart shed still exhibits the same physical and functional relationship to the historic buildings within the farm complex. As such, the absence of a strong visual connection between the buildings is not a determinative factor when considering the setting of Manor Farm.
11. Therefore, the significance of the former cart shed in so far as it relates to these appeals is derived from its architectural and historic interest connected to its role and association within the historic farm complex to which its location, form and historic fabric all contribute.

12. The agricultural nature of the outbuilding signifies the former presence of a working farm and confirms the history of the related main dwelling. Therefore, the outbuilding has significance in its own right but also contributes positively to the special interest of Manor Farm and other associated outbuildings through its historical and functional association with them and its presence within their setting.

Effect on significance

13. The provision of a single storey extension would extend the footprint of the building significantly so that it would unacceptably erode the linear character of the cart shed, which provides an understanding of its previous use. Furthermore, the extension would obliterate two of the cartways reducing the legibility of the cart shed and the dominance of those features within the building. The alterations would therefore undermine the historic and architectural significance of the listed building and cause harm to its identified significance. Although the building would retain the same physical relationship to surrounding listed buildings, it would harm their significance due to the unacceptable loss of the historic agricultural character and layout of the cart shed.
14. The appellant contends that the extension would hardly be visible from outside the site. However, given the extension's location and form, it and its adverse impact on the historic form and character of the former cart shed would be readily perceived from Blacksmith Lane. Moreover, listed buildings are safeguarded for their inherent architectural and historic interest irrespective of whether or not close public views of the building can be gained.
15. Although there have been buildings in the northern part of the site in the past, these were sited immediately adjacent to Blacksmith Lane unlike the proposal before me now.
16. Although not raised in the Council's reason for refusal, I note the proposal also includes the extension of the building to the east by the demolition and rebuilding of the brick pillars, replacing and increasing the height of the roof through its entire removal and replacement. The proposed extension to the north causes harm, but these alterations would result in additional loss of historic fabric and alter the form of the original building adding to my overall concerns.
17. The Council may have agreed much larger extensions and material alterations to Barns 1, and Barns 2/3 and new garaging to Manor Farm. However, these buildings had a different function and historical use to the cart shed within the farm complex. Consequently, they have a different form and architectural style which the Council clearly considered could accommodate some form of extension.
18. The appellant has referred to examples of other conversions of historic agricultural buildings at Laurels Farm, Main Street, Mattersey and Corner Farm, High Street, Everton where, in his view, the buildings have been extended to a greater extent than that proposed before me now. Whether that is the case or not, the significance of those buildings is likely to be different to the particular farm complex before me and I have no substantive detail before me to provide any meaningful comparison.

19. Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation. Paragraph 194 goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of those assets or from development within their setting and that this should have a clear and convincing justification.
20. With reference to paragraphs 195 and 196 of the Framework, in finding harm to the significance of designated heritage assets, the magnitude of that harm should be assessed. Given the fairly limited nature and extent of the proposed development and works I find the harm to be less than substantial in this instance but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.
21. Under such circumstances, paragraph 196 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, which includes securing of optimum viable use of listed buildings. I have had regard to the appellant's submission that potential buyers do not consider the existing footprint of the building capable of achieving a viable conversion and that without the proposed extensions of the cart shed is unlikely to be converted and preserved. The conversion and restoration of the building, including the replacement of the existing roof material with pantiles, which would secure its future as a designated heritage asset, would represent a public benefit that would weigh in favour of the appeals. However, there is limited value in securing a new use for a designated heritage asset if, in doing so, the proposed development and works compromise its conservation to an unacceptable degree and do not conserve it in a manner appropriate to its significance. Furthermore, there is no meaningful substantive evidence before me that confirms that these extensions are the only way of securing the optimum viable use or that its preservation would be at risk if the appeals were to fail and the proposal was not implemented. I therefore give this suggestion limited weight.
22. The provision of one additional dwelling would contribute to the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes and would generate some commercial activity during construction and from prospective occupiers spend in the local economy. However, given the scale of the development such benefits would be modest.
23. Therefore, I conclude that the public benefits of the proposal in this instance would not be sufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified. Given the above and in the absence of any significant public benefit, I conclude that, on balance, the proposal would fail to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building and the setting of nearby listed buildings. This would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act, paragraph 192 of the Framework and conflict with policies DM4 and DM8 of the Bassetlaw Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD 2011 and the adopted Supplementary Planning Document 'Successful Places. Together, these require that development is of good design which complements and enhances the character of the historic environment and is not detrimental to the significance of heritage assets.

Conclusion

24. The proposal would not be in accordance with the development plan and material considerations, including the Framework, do not indicate that the proposal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan.
25. For the reasons given above I conclude that, the appeals should be dismissed.

Zoe Raygen

INSPECTOR