

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 November 2021

by David Fitzsimon MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 DECEMBER 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/D/21/3279243

Oxenhurst Cottage, Back Lane, Slaidburn BB7 3EE

- 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 Ms Louise Randles against the decision of Ribbles Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 3/2021/0404, dated 14 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 10 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a timber outbuilding to provide for garaging, storage and first floor home office.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed outbuilding on the setting of the adjacent listed building and the wider setting of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to a parcel of land which sits in an elevated position to the north of a farmstead which includes a Grade II listed farmhouse and former outbuildings which have been converted to dwellings.
 4. The proposed outbuilding would be a very large structure. A garage and similarly sized enclosed storage area (two of each in total) would sit either side of an open fronted storage area which would be about the size of two parking bays. A log store would also sit at the north-eastern end of the building. The building itself would be tall enough to accommodate sizeable office within the roofspace.
 5. The Appellant's dwelling sits in the middle of three properties which I understand previously formed the farmhouse, barn and outbuilding of the farmstead range. It is very modest in size. The proposed outbuilding would sit on a parcel of elevated land to the north of the farmstead. The Appellant explains that *'there is a rural nature to the setting of the listed building and whilst it is no longer used as a farm and its associated buildings are independent dwellings, the proposed outbuilding would, by its presence, erode*
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that rural nature to a degree'. The Appellant does, however, assert that the rural nature has already been eroded by the domestication of the former farm buildings due to the introduction of driveways, garden areas, new garages and general domestication, whilst stables and a manage have been constructed to the north-east.

6. I agree that the relationship between the farmhouse and the converted barn and outbuilding themselves would not fundamentally change if the proposed outbuilding was erected. Nevertheless, even accounting for the slate roof and use of timber cladding which would weather in time, the proposed outbuilding would be seen as an overly large domestic building. Due to its considerable size and elevated position, the outbuilding would compete with, dominate and harm the setting of the listed farmhouse when approaching along the access lane to the north.
7. I appreciate that large buildings are commonly found within rural landscapes. However, this proposal would introduce a very large structure with a very domestic appearance to elevated land to the north of the farmstead. As a result, the outbuilding would appear out of keeping and unduly prominent within what is a largely unspoilt rural landscape. Existing or additional landscaping would not adequately mitigate this harmful visual impact. Accordingly, I find that the proposed outbuilding would fail to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB.
8. The harm to the heritage asset would be 'less than substantial' as directed by the Planning Practice Guidance, but I attach considerable importance and weight to the statutory duty imposed by section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that special regard should be paid to the desirability of preserving the (listed) building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
9. The National Planning Policy Framework explains that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. It goes on to say that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The Appellant has not suggested that the scheme offers any public benefits.
10. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the setting of the adjacent listed building and it would fail to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB. In these respects, it conflicts with policies EN2, DMG1, DMG2, DME4 and DMH5 of the Local Plan for Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008-2028.
11. The arguments advanced by the Appellant do not outweigh this harm and policy conflict therefore the appeal does not succeed.

David Fitzsimon

INSPECTOR