



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 January 2022

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 FEBRUARY 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/B3030/W/21/3287172

Old Church Farm, Eakring, Nottinghamshire NG22 0DA

- 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 Mrs Sarah Robinson against the decision of Newark and Sherwood District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01473/FUL, dated 10 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 9 November 2021.
 - The development proposed is the refurbishment of existing outbuildings with internal alterations to provide additional living accommodation to Old Church Farm, a single-family dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the refurbishment of existing outbuildings with internal alterations to provide additional living accommodation to Old Church Farm, a single-family dwelling at Old Church Farm, Eakring, Nottinghamshire NG22 0DA in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 21/01473/FUL, dated 10 August 2021, subject to the conditions set out in the schedule to this decision.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and the local area.

Reasons

3. Old Church Farm is a large, detached dwelling with outbuildings that lies within the Eakring Conservation Area (CA). The CA covers much of the main built-up and parts of surrounding countryside, which provide an attractive landscape setting to the settlement. Within the CA is a wide variety of built form that includes groups of historic farm buildings and dwellings that form a largely appealing townscape. As a substantial building of traditional style and materials, the dwelling at Old Church Farm positively contributes to the character and appearance of the CA.
4. The proposal is to partly rebuild, alter and convert the linked outbuildings to one side and rear of the dwelling to form a residential annex. It has been carefully designed to reflect the simple linear form and traditional style of the existing outbuildings although the Council raises particular concern in relation to the 3 roof lights to be placed onto the south-facing roof slope and the large new opening proposed in the north elevation. The Council considers that these elements of the appeal scheme would introduce domestic or suburban features

that in its view would harm the traditional character of the outbuildings, to the detriment of the CA.

5. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document, *Conversion of Traditional Rural Buildings* (SPD) notes that modest alterations such as the introduction of flush rooflights will be acceptable only if they are used with restraint and placed in discreet positions. The SPD adds that if the overall effect destroys the essential character of the building, the conversion will not be allowed.
6. In this case, the new roof lights would be modest in size and their conservation style would ensure a close fit to the plane of the roof slope. Given the screening provided by existing buildings, these features would not be readily evident from the street notwithstanding their elevated position on the outbuildings. While it might be possible to glimpse the new roof lights from a short section of Kirklington Road, such views would be partial, from some distance, at a tight angle and between existing properties. In that context, new roof lights would not draw the eye from the street nor from elsewhere in the public realm.
7. The new roof lights would be visible from the rears of the dwellings that face Kirklington Road just to the south of the site. From this direction, the roofscape of the completed scheme would be seen with the main dwelling at Old Church Farm beyond and the rear of a converted building just to the east both of which have numerous and prominent roof lights. As the proposal would be visually 'read' closely with these buildings, which similarly fall within the CA, the new roof lights would not look out of place on an agricultural building nor appear as an uncharacteristic feature in this part of the CA. While the Council states that some of these existing roof lights predate the adoption of its SPD, they nonetheless form an integral part of the area's character and appearance.
8. An existing opening in the north elevation would be enlarged with full length windows introduced to serve a bedroom within the converted outbuildings. An opening of this size would be atypical of an agricultural building albeit it would not be overly large relative to the host building, nor the windows overtly domestic or suburban in their appearance. When viewed from the rear of Old Church Farm, the new larger opening would appear proportionate. With its largely plain red brick walls, uncluttered pantile roof slope facing north, the proposed scheme would retain the key features of the original outbuildings, notably their simple functional form and appearance.
9. Taken overall, the completed scheme would remain clearly legible as a former agricultural building. The character, design and detailing of the host building and its relationship to the surrounding area would be respected. As a result, the positive contribution of Old Church Farm to the character and appearance of the CA would be maintained. None of the new larger opening or other windows in the north-facing elevation would be seen beyond the back garden of Old Church Farm. Consequently, the effect on the wider area and the surrounding landscape would not be significant.
10. I saw that several other agricultural buildings within the CA included roof lights and sizeable openings that were far more visible from the road than the proposal without significant detriment to the qualities of the host building or the character and appearance of their local street scene. Therefore, I am not persuaded that the proposal would materially detract from the character or appearance of the CA, which would be preserved.

11. On the main issue, I conclude that the proposed development would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the host building or the local area. Accordingly, there is no conflict with Core Policy 13 of the Newark and Sherwood Amended Core Strategy, Policies DM5 and DM6 of the Allocations and Development Management Development Plan Document, or the advice within the Council's SPD. These planning policies and guidance collectively seek to ensure that alterations and extensions to outbuildings respect the host building; the character of the surrounding area including the significance and setting of any heritage assets; and landscape character.
12. The proposal would also be in accordance with the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework insofar as protecting heritage assets, conserving the natural environment, and achieving well designed places are concerned. It would also comply with the statutory duty, which requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas, which I have done.

Conditions

13. In addition to the standard time limit condition, it is necessary to impose a condition that requires the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans for certainty. To ensure that the appearance of the new development is satisfactory, a condition is imposed to require samples of the external materials to be approved.
14. For the same reason, conditions are also imposed to ensure that all external joinery is timber and to require details of the windows, doors, exterior fittings, roof lights, and to ensure that the finish of any external works match the existing building. A condition is also necessary to restrict the use of the annex to ensure that the development remains ancillary to the main dwelling.
15. The conditions largely reflect those suggested by the Council with minor changes, where necessary, mainly for clarity and precision.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR

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Schedule of conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall not begin later than three years from the date of this permission.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Refs 21/230/300 Revision A, 21/230/301 Revision A, 21/230/302 and 21/230/303.
- 3) Notwithstanding the submitted details, no works in relation to the walls and roof of the buildings shall take place until samples of the materials to be used in the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 4) No development shall take place in respect of the following features until details of the design, specification, fixing and finish in the form of drawings and sections at a scale of not less than 1:10 have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority: external windows, doors, and their surroundings, including details of glazing and glazing bars; window and door heads and cills; verges and eaves; rainwater goods; coping; extractor vents; flues; meter boxes; airbricks; soil and vent pipes. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 5) All external joinery in the development hereby permitted, including windows and doors, shall be of a timber construction and without trickle vents.
- 6) No development shall take place in respect of the roof lights hereby permitted until a detailed specification of all new roof lights has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The specification shall include details of type, size, materials, position on the roof slope, colour, method of opening, method of fixing and appearance. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 7) All work and work of making good shall be finished to match the existing exterior of the buildings in respect of brickwork, face bond, mortar and pointing, and shall be so maintained.
- 8) The building hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwelling known as Old Church Farm, Eakring, Nottinghamshire NG22 0DA.