



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 February 2022

By K Winnard LL.B Hons Solicitor

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/J0405/D/22/3290069

North Stables Horton Road Horton LU7 0QR

- 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 M McVeigh against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref 21/03793/APP, dated 24 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 20 November 2021.
 - The development proposed is a single storey rear extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. There was no one at home at the time of my visit. I was however able to access the site via the electronic gates which had been opened remotely for me. There was also the opportunity to view the site from the public highway.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property, North Stables, is sited in an attractive development of converted and extended former agricultural buildings and Horton House, a non designated heritage asset. The property retains a simple linear form, with steep pitched roofs and an inherent character and appearance of a former agricultural building.
5. The proposed extension would incorporate a flat crown roof concealed with a pitched roof on three sides. The flat roof element of the design would avoid impinging on the first floor door in the existing gable end. However the perimeter pitched roof would be a prominent feature and obscure views of the door and gable end from the east. There would be a stark contrast with the simple linear form of the host property. Whilst the set back of the proposed extension would ensure that it would be subservient to the host property, it would nonetheless undermine the strong linear form of the building. As such it would result in an awkward relationship between the original building and the proposed extension. Taken together, the proposed extension would result in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host property.

6. The proposed extension would be visible in views from Horton Road. Further, as a result of the roof slopes being high, views would be obtained of the upper part of the extension which would be an incongruous contrast to the simple linear form of the upper part of the host building, and in particular the gable end. Whilst there is an existing hedge which would obscure most views of the proposed extension, this hedge is not in the control of the appellant. I note that there is a boundary fence, in the control of the appellant, behind the hedge but this would not in itself effectively screen the majority of views obtainable from Horton Road.
7. I appreciate that the current design would address the concerns expressed by the Inspector in the previous appeal¹ and that no concerns about the alignment or siting of the extension were raised in that case. However the previous scheme was for an extension sited closer to the boundary with the adjoining property and did not significantly impinge on the gable end of the host property. As such the two schemes are not directly comparable.
8. I note that the Council has not raised any concerns about the relationship of the proposed extension to the significance of Horton House, the non designated heritage asset. Given the extent of the separation between Horton House and the siting of the proposal, I would agree with their assessment. Accordingly I conclude that the significance of Horton House as a non designated heritage asset would be unharmed by the proposal. However the lack of harm in this respect does not weigh in favour of the proposal.
9. The appellant has raised concerns that the Council in assessing the proposal has unduly relied on guidance relating to the original conversion of agricultural buildings, which advises against extensions. On the information before me, I am not aware of any policy or guidance which expressly precludes any form of extensions to converted buildings. However in this case the simple form and shape of the former agricultural building are distinctive features of the building's characteristics. The introduction of an overly distinctive element would disrupt the simple uncluttered gable end, and would be seen in the context of the traditional former agricultural building and its immediate neighbours. These characteristics would be diminished by the current appeal proposal.
10. I appreciate that the proposed extension would be constructed in matching materials, however aspects of good design are fundamental to all development, as stated in the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) and would not represent a notable benefit. Whilst the appellant refers to the development as being sustainable, the Framework also requires development to add to the overall quality of the area and to be sympathetic to the surrounding built environment. I acknowledge too that no objections to the proposal have been received, particularly from the Parish Council. However this does not indicate a lack of harm arising from the proposal.
11. I therefore conclude that the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. Accordingly it conflicts with Policy BE2 of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan and Policy SPL6 of the Slapton Neighbourhood Plan. These policies seek to ensure that new development should respect the scale and context of the site and its setting and to complement the local distinctiveness and vernacular character of

¹ APP/J0405/D/20/3257713

the locality. It would also conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework which requires development to be sympathetic to local character.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given and having regard to all matters raised, I hereby dismiss the appeal.

K Winnard

INSPECTOR