



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 February 2022

by Ian McHugh DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2ND March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/B3438/D/21/3285214

The Dairy, Ringe Hay Farm, Basford, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 7ET

- 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 and Mrs Dickinson against the decision of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.
 - The application Ref SMD/2021/0321, dated 8 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 30 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is a rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a rear extension at The Dairy, Ringe Hay Farm, Basford, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 7ET in accordance with the terms of the application Ref SMD/2021/0321, dated 8 May 2021, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing Numbers: 21-0007-10-001 rev P1; 21-0007-10-002 Rev P1; 21-0007-10-101 Rev P1; 21-0007-20-001 Rev P1; 21-0007-20-002 Rev P2; and 21-0007-20-101 Rev P2.
 - 3) No works shall commence until details and samples of all external facing materials have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The relevant works shall be carried out in accordance with the details thereby approved.
 - 4) No works shall commence until a sample panel of the external facing masonry work has been provided on site and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The sample panel shall show the proposed walling materials, masonry block size, coursing structure, mortar mix and pointing, written details of each of which shall also be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before works commence. All pointing shall be of a strength and style appropriate to the type of walling materials used and shall not include 'tuck', 'strap' or 'recessed' pointing. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the details and sample panel thereby approved. The approved sample panel shall be retained on site for the duration of the works and shall not be removed until the external walls of the extension hereby approved are completed.

- 5) No works shall commence until detailed joinery plans and sections of the proposed frame structure and glazing to all openings, at a scale of 1:5, 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate, and details of the frame materials and finishes to all openings have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Those plans shall include details of the side (north east) glazing, the two rear (north west) ground floor windows, and the rooflights to the extension. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the details thereby approved.
- 6) Notwithstanding the submitted development site shown by red edge in drawing 21-0007-10-001 revision P1 'existing site and location plans' nothing in this permission shall be taken as conferring consent for residential use of any of the land which falls outside of the area granted Certificate of Lawfulness of proposed use or development as permanent private dwellinghouses with associated gardens and Parking under reference SMD/2019/0033.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and its surroundings.

Procedural Matter

3. As part of the appellants' appeal submission, revised plans have been submitted to show alterations to the design of the proposed extension. These alterations propose the deletion of two windows on the rear elevation. In my opinion, the amended plans are relatively minor and their submission does not prejudice the Council. Consequently, I have taken these into account in reaching my decision.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is two-storey dwelling, which was originally a barn associated with Ringe Hay Farm. The dwelling is constructed of stone with a plain tiled roof. The planning history shows that it was originally converted to form holiday accommodation in 2008, but it is now a private dwelling. I note that permitted development rights have been withdrawn. The building is part of a group of former agricultural buildings that are located around an open yard and close to the original farmhouse. Open countryside surrounds the site.
5. There is some discussion by both parties regarding the heritage significance of the appeal property and the site in general, but it is common ground that the buildings are not listed, nor are they within a conservation area. Nevertheless, I agree with the Council that there can be some significance, even if buildings are not designated heritage assets. In this case, there is some heritage importance, due to age and location of the farmstead and the traditional arrangement and scale of the buildings. I also note that it is recorded in the Staffordshire Historic Farmstead Survey 2009 and in the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record.
6. There is clearly some uncertainty over the extent of the original building that was retained during the original conversion. However, the evidence before me shows that the work (both internal and external), including some demolition was significant. Notwithstanding, I accept that the building has retained an

- agricultural character, although there are the inevitable domestic interventions, particularly in terms of fenestration and door details.
7. The proposal is to construct a single storey extension at the rear of the building. The proposal was amended during the application stage, which reduced the size of the extension to the effect that it now covers approximately 60 – 65%% of the width of the dwelling, as opposed to the full width, as originally submitted.
 8. The extension would provide additional living area space and would also facilitate internal alterations to the existing space in order to provide a ground-floor accessible shower room and utility area. The applicants state that a ground floor shower room is necessary for health reasons as accessing the first-floor facilities is becoming increasingly difficult.
 9. The Council refers to a number of Development Plan policies in its decision notice. Policies DC1 and DC2 of the adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2020 (LP) state (amongst other things) that the design of new development should be of high quality and should seek to preserve or enhance buildings or features that contribute to the character or heritage of an area. Policy SS10 also requires development to have a positive effect, whilst Policy DC3 seeks to ensure that development respects the local landscape. The Council also references Policy H1, but this relates to new housing development. Consequently, I am not persuaded that it is directly relevant to the proposal. I consider these policies to be 'up to date' and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (The Framework), which contains similar provisions.
 10. In reaching my decision, I have also taken into account the advice contained in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document -Design Guide 2018 (SPD) and in earlier Supplementary Planning Guidance – Design Principles (SPG). The Council states that the latter is still relevant. I note that that the Council's guidance advocates that extensions should harmonise with the existing building and that extensions to converted rural buildings are generally discouraged.
 11. One of the Council's reasons for refusal points to the absence of a supporting Heritage Statement. However, the building is not a heritage asset and, in any event, I consider that the appellants' grounds of appeal and officer report are sufficient to gain an understanding of the site's significance and history.
 12. The extension would appear as a relatively simple and subordinate addition to the dwelling. It would match a similar extension that has been built on the adjoining property. I accept that the adjoining extension was constructed whilst that building was still in agricultural use, but nevertheless, I agree with the appellant that many buildings change and adapt over time, irrespective of their use.
 13. It is a matter for debate as to how much of the original wall would be covered or removed by constructing the extension. I also note that some of the existing rear windows would be removed and detailing around the existing rear door would be lost. However, taking the proposed extension on its individual merits, I consider it to a sympathetic addition to the property in terms of its scale, simple design and materials. Furthermore, it would not be readily visible from public viewpoints and, therefore, it would not impact on the local landscape.

14. Although the Council states that some of the reasons put forward by the appellants regarding the need for the extension are desirable rather than essential, I attribute weight to the appellants' requirements, as the provision of washing and wc facilities on the ground floor will improve their living conditions within the dwelling.
15. As stated above, the appellants have submitted revised drawings, which amend the rear elevation of the extension by deleting two windows. However, these windows are relatively small and would provide an additional source of natural light into, what is already, a relatively dark living space, notwithstanding the proposed glazed door on the side elevation. I consider the windows to be acceptable and, therefore, I have made my decision on the basis of the original plans.
16. For the above reasons, the proposed extension would not have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of the appeal property or on its surroundings. Therefore, there is no conflict with the policies of the Development Plan or with The Framework, as referred to above.

Conditions

17. The Council has suggested conditions in the event of the appeal being allowed. In addition to the standard conditions relating to the time period for commencement and the listing of approved plans, I have also imposed the Council's suggested conditions in respect of materials and the submission of further details in respect of joinery. These are necessary to ensure a satisfactory appearance and finish to the development.
18. The Council has also suggested a condition that effectively states that the permission does not grant approval for a change of use of adjoining land, which is shown within the red line on the submitted plans. For reasons of clarity and the avoidance of doubt, I consider this to be reasonable and necessary.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons given above, it is concluded that the appeal be allowed.

Ian McHugh

INSPECTOR