



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 1 February 2022

by Helen Hockenhull BA (Hons) B. PI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 March 2022

Appeal A Ref: APP/T3725/W/21/3283831

Oldfield Farm, Old Warwick Road, Rowington, CV35 7AA

- 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 Waters against the decision of Warwick District Council.
 - The application Ref W/21/0073, dated 23 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is the demolition and replacement of 3 no. porches.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/T3725/Y/21/3283808

Oldfield Farm, Old Warwick Road, Rowington, CV35 7AA

- 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 and Mrs Waters against the decision of Warwick District Council.
 - The application Ref W/21/0074/LB, dated 23 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 September 2021.
 - The works proposed are the demolition and replacement of 3 no. porches.
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Decisions

Appeal A

1. The appeal is dismissed

Appeal B

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. As the proposal relates to a listed building, I have had special regard to sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Act.
4. Approximately 50 metres northeast of the appeal site lies a scheduled monument, 'Moated site northeast of Oldfield Farm (Ref:1013157)'. The proposal would therefore be within its setting. However, the presence of existing outbuildings and mature vegetation, would ensure that the development would be physically and visually separate from the former moat. The Council have raised no concern about the effect of the appeal scheme on the significance of the scheduled monument. Given the above, I find that the proposal would preserve its significance.

Main Issues

5. The main issues in this case are:

- whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, having regard to national policy and relevant development plan policies, and the effect on the openness of the Green Belt.
- whether the proposal would preserve a Grade II listed building, Oldfield Farmhouse (Ref:1184580) and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

6. The appeal property comprises a two-storey farmhouse set in attractive grounds to the north of Old Warwick Road, between the villages of Rowington and Shrewley. It is proposed to demolish the existing timber frame porches on the southwest, southeast and northwest elevations and replace them with new timber framed fully glazed porches. The site lies within the Green Belt.

Inappropriate development and openness

7. Paragraph 149 of the Framework regards the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt as inappropriate development. The Framework outlines a number of exceptions to this. The most relevant in this case is the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling.
8. Policy DS18 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 states that the Council will apply national Green Belt policy. Policy H14 of the Local Plan requires that extensions in the Green Belt should not form disproportionate additions to the original dwelling. The supporting text to this policy explains that as a guide, taking account of any previous extension, an increase of more than 30% to the gross floor area of the original dwelling is likely to be disproportionate.
9. In this case, the original farmhouse has been extended in the past. A detached outbuilding approximately 3 metres from the farmhouse has been joined through the construction of a two-storey link extension. The Council calculates that the property has already been extended by around 34%. The increase in floor area created by the three replacement porches amounts to approximately 2 square metres, a further 1%. This is a very minor increase. Taking account of the nature of the scheme, and that the 30% figure in Policy H14 is a guide, I consider that this increase in floor area would not be disproportionate to the original dwelling.
10. The glazed nature of the porches would result in an increase in visual mass. However, in the context of the farmhouse as a whole, the proposal would not result in any material loss of openness to the Green Belt.
11. Overall, I concur with the Council that the appeal scheme would not form inappropriate development in the Green Belt or cause harm to openness. The proposal would therefore comply with the Framework and Local Plan Policies DS18 and H14.

Effect on the significance of the listed building

12. Oldfield Farmhouse is a two-storey timber frame and red brick property dating from the mid-17th century, with an 18th century brick front. As I have mentioned above, the original farmhouse has been sympathetically extended with a link to an adjacent outbuilding. The property has an old plain tile cross gabled roof and a brick ridge stack centre with 4 diagonally set flues. The rear and side elevation have small timber framing with brick infill. This detailing on the original farmhouse, forms a distinctive feature which contributes to the historic and aesthetic value of the building.
13. Given the above, I consider the special interest of the listed building, insofar as it relates to this appeal, is derived from it being a good example of a 17th and 18th century Warwickshire farmhouse, its architectural and aesthetic features and the historic legibility of its phased development.
14. The proposed porch on the northwest elevation would have a dual pitch design, matching the existing. The appellant claims the replacement porch would be the same size, but this is clearly not the case from the submitted plans¹. It would be taller and wider than the existing timber frame structure. This increase in scale and mass results in a greater amount of the timber framing and brick panelling being obscured. The existing porch is a simple structure which appears subservient on this elevation. The ridge of the proposed replacement porch would extend above the sill of an adjacent first floor window. Together with the increased width, it would result in a more prominent and disproportionate feature. This would distract from the simple, historic architectural form of this elevation.
15. The appellant has brought my attention to a previous scheme for an extension to the farmhouse which was dismissed on appeal. It included a replacement porch on this elevation to which no objections were raised. I note this structure was also designed with glazed panels; however, it simply enclosed the porch opening and did not propose its enlargement.
16. Turning to the southwest elevation, the existing timber porch sits comfortably within the central element of this double gabled elevation. The proposed replacement porch, whilst being positioned centrally, would however be slightly wider, covering more of the historic fabric. Again, the appellant asserts the replacement porch is the same size. It has the same footprint and height but with the glazed panels either side of the door it is slightly wider. The proposed dual pitch roof replacing the current mono pitch, increases the scale and mass of the porch. This gives the structure greater prominence on this elevation, resulting in a discordant and distracting addition.
17. On the southeast elevation the replacement porch would be of the same dimensions and design to that on the southwest elevation. However due to the position of existing windows, the porch extends slightly further towards the southern end of the building. This means that the centrally positioned door of the extended porch would not align with the door opening into the farmhouse. This would obstruct views of this historic opening and also be visually distracting and incongruous. Furthermore, the scale and bulk of the proposed porch, together with the extent of framing, would result in a visually assertive addition to this elevation that would erode its historic form.

¹ Drawing No. 2036 PL006 Proposed Plans and Elevations Existing Overlay.

18. Cumulatively, the proposed three replacement porches would form incongruent modern additions, unsympathetic to the aesthetic and architectural qualities of this heritage asset.
19. I acknowledge that the proposed glazed design would enable views through to the historic fabric of the building. However, due to the size and design of the glazed panels, this visibility would be restricted by the timber frame of the proposed porches, diminishing the ability for the heritage asset to be appreciated.
20. Given the above, I find the appeal scheme would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building. I give this harm considerable importance and weight in the planning balance of this appeal.
21. Paragraph 199 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. It goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of these assets. Given the limited extent of the proposal, I find the harm to be less than substantial.
22. Accordingly in line with paragraph 202 of the Framework, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The appellant argues that the scheme would be beneficial as it would provide enclosure to the porches and better weather protection. However, this would be a private benefit of the occupiers and not a public benefit.
23. I note that the Design and Access Statement accompanying the original planning application states that the existing porches are in very poor condition and beyond repair. Following my observations at my site visit, whilst the structures need some maintenance, I do not agree that they are in too poor a condition to be repaired.
24. In light of the above, I conclude that in the absence of any substantiated public benefit, the proposal would fail to preserve the special historic interest of the Grade II listed building. It would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act, the Framework and conflict with Policy HE1 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2019. This policy aims to maintain and protect heritage assets and the historic character of the district. Accordingly, the proposal would not comply with the development plan.

Conclusion

25. For the reasons given, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I dismiss these appeals.

Helen Hockenhull

INSPECTOR