



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 May 2022

by S D Castle BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30th May 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/W1850/D/22/3294677

Pool Meadow Barn, Brook Lane, Bosbury HR8 1QD

- 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 & Mrs Stuart & Sarah Griffiths against the decision of Herefordshire Council.
 - The application Ref 213537, dated 17 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 20 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is single storey linked extension and alterations to existing dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for construction of single storey linked extension and alterations to existing dwelling at Pool Meadow Barn, Bosbury HR8 1QD in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 213537, dated 17 September 2021 and subject to the conditions in the attached Schedule.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area;

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to a former agricultural barn located abutting the eastern side of Brook Lane, a narrow country lane that rises from south to north adjacent to the site. The surrounding area is predominantly rolling open countryside interspersed with sporadic housing and agricultural buildings. The mature hedges and fragmented pattern of development along Brook Lane, with agricultural land beyond, give the surrounding area an intrinsically rural character. I acknowledge that the original conversion involved significant works to the barn, including part demolition and replacement of external materials. Nevertheless, Pool Meadow Barn's agricultural lineage remains legible through its simple linear form, limited openings, weatherboard cladding and countryside context. The converted barn has, therefore, sufficiently retained its agricultural character so as to contribute positively to the rural character of the area.
4. The proposed extension would project from the eastern elevation of the dwelling, with the main bulk of the extension joined to the existing dwelling by a flat-roofed link. The link would be fully glazed to its southern elevation and would have full width, but high level, glazing to its northern side. The link would, therefore, provide a visual break between the existing dwelling and the

main bulk of the extension. Whilst the link would assist in maintaining the legibility of the converted barn, the resulting footprint would be a more complex T-shaped arrangement inconsistent with the simple linear form and utilitarian appearance of the converted barn.

5. The extension would be visible in public views from Brook Road and the windows on the southern elevation of the extension would give the dwelling a more residential appearance. The glazing used on the east elevation would also be more extensive and of different proportions to that used in the original part of the building. As such, rather than appearing subordinate, due to its domestic character and proportions, the extension would compete with the original barn conversion, causing harm to the character of the original building.
6. The extension would, therefore, dilute the rural character of the barn conversion by virtue of its non-linear form and domesticating fenestration. Consequently, the development would be harmful to the character of the host dwelling and to the rural character of the surrounding area. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policies SD1, LD1 and SS6 of the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy (CS), and Policy 2 of the Bosbury and Catley Neighbourhood Development Plan, which taken together, amongst other things, require development to respect the local distinctiveness and character of the area. Moreover, the development would be inconsistent with section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) as it would not add to the overall quality of the area and would not be sympathetic to the local character.
7. The Council's refusal reason also cites CS Policies RA5 and LD4. The proposal involves the continuing use of the existing dwelling rather than its re-use. As such, Policy RA5 is not relevant to the development before me. CS Policy LD4 relates to development proposals that affect heritage assets and the wider historic environment. There is no dispute between the parties that the building is not listed, nor in a conservation area, nor identified on a local list. I acknowledge that the lack of inclusion on a local list does not preclude the building from being considered a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA). It is inevitable that some NDHAs will only be discovered and identified through the planning application process. The appellants state that what stands of the "original" building is the internal timber frame of the retained northern half of the building. The Council has provided no substantive evidence as to the heritage significance of the building. I am not persuaded, therefore, that the proposal would represent any harm to a non-designated heritage asset. The proposal would not, therefore, conflict with either CS Policy LD4 or section 14 of the Framework.

Planning Balance

8. Subsequent to the appeal being lodged, the appellants have provided details of the granting of a prior approval¹ on the appeal site by the Council for a rear single storey extension which would extend the dwelling by 7.96 metres, with a maximum height of 3.9 metres and eaves height of 2.4 metres. The Council were given an opportunity to comment on the granted prior approval scheme as part of the appeal process and, in doing so, the Council maintained their objection to the current appeal scheme. I find, however, that the alternative scheme would have a more harmful effect on the rural character of the barn conversion by virtue of its squat form and proportions at odds with those of the

¹ LPA Ref: 220826

original building. I am satisfied that if the appeal proposal were not erected, there is every likelihood that this alternative prior approval scheme would be built. As such, the granted prior approval scheme represents a fallback position of substantial weight in favour of the appeal proposal.

9. I have also had regard to the recent granting of planning permission² by the Council for a proposed single storey linked extension and alterations to the existing dwelling on the appeal site. However, I have not been provided with full details of that permission and so cannot make a direct comparison. As such, the extant permission is given limited weight.
10. On the balance of all that is before me, the likely erection of the alternative scheme granted prior approval is a material consideration that, in this case, justifies a decision which is not in accordance with the development plan or the provisions of the Framework.

Conditions

11. In addition to the standard time limit on the commencement of development (1), it is necessary to list the relevant plans (2) as it provides certainty.
12. To protect the character and appearance of the area, a condition securing appropriate finishing materials (3) is necessary.
13. In the interests of ecology, a condition ensuring enhancement of biodiversity in accordance with Framework paragraph 174 is necessary (4).

Conclusion

14. For the reasons above the appeal is allowed subject to the conditions as set out.

S D Castle

INSPECTOR

² LPA Ref: 220696

Schedule of Conditions attached to Appeal Decision
Appeal Ref: APP/W1850/D/22/3294677
Pool Meadow Barn, Brook Lane, Bosbury HR8 1QD

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not 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: 1:1000 scale Location Plan; 1:500 scale block plan, dwg no. T1404.P3; 1:100 scale Proposed Floor Plan Plans & South Elevation, dwg no. T1404.P1; 1:100 scale Proposed Elevations, dwg no. T1404.P2.
- 3) No development above slab level in pursuance of the extension hereby permitted shall commence until details / samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension 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 / samples.
- 4) No development above slab level in pursuance of the extension hereby permitted shall commence until full details of the bird and bat boxes to be installed on site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The bird and bat boxes shall be installed in accordance with the approved details (including a timetable for installation) and shall be retained thereafter.