



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 May 2022

by M Aqbal BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 June 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/H1840/D/21/3282932

Meadow Bank, Elmbridge Green Road, Elmbridge WR9 0NH

- 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 C Benton against the decision of Wychavon District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01425/HP, dated 4 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 28 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host property.

Reasons

3. The host property comprises part of a group of dwellings arising from the conversion of a complex of former agricultural buildings in a countryside location, which forms part of the Green Belt.
4. I acknowledge that the conversion has resulted in some subdivision and domestication through the creation of amenity areas and the addition of modest porches. Nevertheless, whilst there may be other examples of converted agricultural buildings locally and nationally, in this case great consideration has been given to the original conversion. To this end, I observed that the overall footprint and form of the original building has been largely retained. Furthermore, the quality of the conversion is also reflected through attention to materials and architectural detailing.
5. Also, modern openings are limited in scale and numbers. In particular, along the rear elevation of the host property and adjoining properties. Together, these factors give the host property and the wider complex a distinctive character and appearance, even if this is limited to a local level. Furthermore, in my view the conversion retains the historical identity of these buildings as being part of a former agricultural unit.
6. Therefore, because of their architecture and historical identity, the host property and the wider complex of former agricultural buildings positively contribute to the built environment of the area.

7. The proposed single storey rear extension would occupy a sizeable extent of the rear elevation of the host property. Furthermore, and notwithstanding its subordinate height and consideration of materials, the proposed extension with its half-hipped roof design incorporating a roof lantern would not reflect the traditional character and form of the barn. These factors, along with the extensive use of glazing along the rear elevation would result in a particularly modern, unsympathetic and discordant addition to the host property, which would not reflect traditional style and form of this property and the wider complex.
8. Whilst the proposed extension would be located to the rear of the host property and therefore not visible from the public realm, this does not lessen the requirement for good design in relation to the character and appearance of the host property.
9. For the above reasons, the proposal represents poor design and would unacceptably detract from the character and appearance of the host property. This is in conflict with Policy SWDP 21 of the South Worcestershire Development Plan, which along with other things states that all development will be expected to be of a high design quality and will need to integrate effectively with its surroundings, in terms of form and reinforce local distinctiveness. Accordingly, the proposal would fail to accord with Paragraph 197c of the Framework, which requires that new development makes a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Other Matters

10. The proposed extension does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building and therefore is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. This matter largely relates to the size of the extension and therefore is different to considerations in respect of design. As such, whilst the proposal maybe acceptable in terms of Green Belt policy it does not follow that it would also be acceptable in terms of design.
11. I acknowledge that given the generic and broad nature of local and national design policies, elements of these are not relevant to the proposal and in some regards the proposal may be acceptable, for example the use of matching materials. Nonetheless, I have found the proposal unacceptable for the reasons set out above.
12. The appellants have referred to extensions at nearby Elmbridge Manor. This is a substantial detached dwelling and not a barn conversion. Also, I have insufficient information in respect of the extensions at this property to draw any meaningful conclusions.
13. From the information before me, whilst an extension at Orchard House has been approved, this incorporates a pitched roof with a narrower footprint in relation to the overall width of the host elevation and reflects other projecting hipped gables within the wider complex. Notwithstanding this, each application is determined on its merits.
14. Whilst the appellants' agent may have sought to negotiate over the size and design of the proposal with the Council, this does not alter my findings on the main issue.

Conclusion

15. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Aqbal

INSPECTOR