



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 June 2022

by Nigel Harrison BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/E2340/W/22/349100

Bradley's Barn, Blacko Bar Road, Roughlee, Nelson, Lancashire, BB9 6NL

- 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 M Bradley against the decision of Pendle Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: 21/0443/FUL, dated 24 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 21 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a detached garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. I have dealt with the appeal on the basis of the revised location plan and the revised proposed site/elevations plan (125-03B) submitted during the application process and considered by the Council. The location plan has been revised to ensure that the site boundary corresponds to that shown on the approved plans for the barn conversion, and the site/elevations plan has been revised to reduce the areas of hardstanding/parking/turning originally shown.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the existing barn and the surrounding countryside.

Reasons

4. The appeal site lies in open countryside beyond the small settlement of Roughlee within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The existing barn on the site has planning permission for conversion to a dwelling (20/0398/FUL), and it was evident from my site visit that work on the conversion had begun.
5. The proposal is for a double garage to be located adjacent to the roadside boundary. It would measure approximately 6.8m in length x 6.8 wide with an overall height of 4.25m to the ridge. The external walls would be natural stone and the roof covered with natural grey stone slate.
6. Policy ENV1 of the *Pendle Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy* (LP) seeks to ensure a high design standard that preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area and requires the impact of new development on the natural

- environment to be kept to a minimum. Amongst other things LP Policy ENV2 says the siting and design of development should be in harmony with its surroundings.
7. Paragraph 176 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (the Framework) says great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs.
 8. The Council's *Design Principles Supplementary Planning Document* (SPD1) says garages that are over dominant in relation to existing and surrounding properties will not be approved, particularly in prominent locations. The *Development in the Open Countryside Supplementary Planning Document* (SPD2) also applies. It says the detailed design and external appearance of buildings should be sensitive to the landscape setting and the detailed guidance appropriate for the defined individual character areas. The appeal site is within the moorland fringe character area where development is required to achieve minimal visibility within the landscape, to work with the natural or re-profiled landform, and to employ natural materials.
 9. Although a residential use has now been permitted at the site, which will undoubtedly change its character and result in a degree of domestication, the approved scheme for the barn conversion does not include any garage provision and instead shows an open parking area in the same location. The Council says the conversion was permitted on the basis that it would represent the optimal use of a heritage asset. Whilst the barn is not a listed building nor within a conservation area, it is a typical example of a vernacular field barn of traditional materials and simple form, and the approved scheme has been sensitively designed to preserve the essence and character of a barn. Just because the barn has permission for residential use it does not necessarily flow from this that a new-build garage would be automatically acceptable, and this is not disputed by the appellants.
 10. Conversions of agricultural buildings can often contribute to the architectural and historic character of an area, and to its landscape quality. However, the introduction of a detached garage in close proximity to the barn would detract from its 'stand-alone' appearance within its immediate and wider setting. The garage would be located immediately adjacent to the road and would be prominent in views towards the barn when approached from either direction. Notwithstanding the use of appropriate and sympathetic materials, the wide garage doors and low pitch of the roof would make it appear as a modern building of domestic appearance, wholly at odds with the character and appearance of the barn and its surroundings.
 11. I accept that the visual impact of the garage would be mitigated to some extent because of the intention to incorporate a section of the existing roadside boundary wall. Some additional screening would be provided by existing vegetation within the verge, and to a limited degree by the small sewage pump house station. However, it is inappropriate to rely on features outside the site boundary to partly screen an unacceptable form of development, as their retention cannot be guaranteed in the long term.
 12. Overall, I conclude that the proposed garage would materially harm the character and appearance of the existing barn and the surrounding countryside, having particular regard to the location within the Forest of Bowland AONB. As such, it would conflict with LP Policies ENV1 and ENV2, and

would fail to meet the objectives of paragraph 176 of the Framework. It would also conflict with guidance in the Councils Supplementary Planning Documents.

Other Matters

13. I have no overriding objections to the amount of hard surfacing now proposed in the revised plan (126-03B), as this appears roughly to correspond with that already approved as part of the residential conversion.
14. The appellants have clarified that the 'new fence' proposed on the southern boundary would be a stock proof fence, and I accept that a fence of this type may be acceptable, subject to the approval of satisfactory details.
15. However, notwithstanding the lack of harm caused by these associated elements of the scheme, the harm that would be caused by the proposed garage to the character and appearance of the existing barn and surrounding countryside amounts to a significant, substantial, and overriding objection which must be decisive.
16. I note that discussions have taken place between the parties to address the possibility that, if approved, the garage could potentially be built ahead of the approved scheme for conversion of the barn. However, as conversion works have already begun, this is not a matter I need to consider further.

Conclusion

17. The proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the Framework's provisions, which outweigh this finding. Therefore, for the reasons given above and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Nigel Harrison

INSPECTOR