



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 June 2022

by Katherine Robbie BA (Hons) DipTP MTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/G0908/W/22/3294782

Field beside 1 High Rigg (Fell View), Brigham, Cockermouth, Cumbria CA13 0TA

- 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 John Goulding against the decision of Allerdale Borough Council.
 - The application Ref FUL/2021/0249, dated 25 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 20 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is the change of use from stables to holiday let cottage.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on a) the character and appearance of the area; and b) the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers with specific regard to noise and disturbance

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal site is the corner of an open and undeveloped grass field, surrounded by hedges and trees, sloping down to the southwest. It's on the edge of Brigham, a tightly grained and thus clearly defined rural village characterised by mainly frontage development following the road pattern. It has a hard edge and is thus distinct from the surrounding countryside which is largely unaltered and features the occasional example of built form associated with countryside uses. One of which is the stable block subject of the appeal, which is a modern, three bay, blockwork lean to structure on a concrete base. The access shown on the plans is currently a mown strip. No hard surfacing appeared to be present. The prevailing verdant feel and open, undeveloped rurality of the fields and landscape around the edge of the village contributes positively to a strong, unspoilt countryside quality.
4. The appeal building's blockwork construction and subsequent utilitarian appearance is of limited architectural merit. Work required to bring the building up to a habitable standard would result in it taking on a distinctly domestic appearance which, when associated with a defined curtilage, surfaced access, parking and other associated paraphernalia would bring an urban appearance to the site, jarring with the defined and high quality, rural landscape. In addition, a new residential use would be noticeably divorced from the enclosed and tightly grained character of the village.

5. I acknowledge that Policy SA32 of the Allerdale Local Plan Part 2 (2018) (ALP2) gives support for tourist accommodation within Local Service Centres. However, as identified above the site is not located within the settlement of Brigham. Support is also given through Policy S31 of the Allerdale Local Plan Part 1 (2014) (ALP1) for the re-use of rural buildings where it can be demonstrated that development would contribute to the rural economy and the community. I have not been presented with any compelling evidence to indicate the contribution that the proposal would make in this respect. However, given the scale of the proposal this is likely to be small and would unlikely outweigh the harm that I have found on this main issue.
6. I also accept that the stable building was granted planning permission and was considered acceptable in appearance at that time. However, this was in the context of the development proposed and not the proposal before me.
7. Accordingly, the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would this be contrary to ALP1 Policy S31 which seeks to control the reuse of rural buildings in the open countryside. The proposal would also be contrary to the design principles set out in ALP1 Policies S4, S32 and S33, which seek, amongst other things, to protect the character and appearance of the areas and ensure that development and to integrates well with existing development.

Living Conditions

8. Access to the proposal would run immediately adjacent to the flank wall of No. 1 High Rigg (Fell View) and along the side boundary of the property known as 'Brigadoon'. Although the number of vehicle movements associated with a single holiday let would not be large, the close proximity of the access to the adjacent dwellings and their private gardens would nevertheless cause disturbance through passing vehicles, the opening of gates, and general comings and goings. This would be especially intrusive outside of daylight hours when previously there was unlikely to be any regular activity at the site.
9. It is not clear how long the stables have been redundant for. They did not appear to be in use at the time of my site visit. The appellant states that the previous use of the building as stables could attract up to 12 vehicle movements per day. However, no evidence of the intensity of the previous use is before me and therefore I give this limited weight.
10. The proposal would therefore unacceptably harm the living conditions of the occupiers of 1 High Rigg (Fell View) and Brigadoon with regard to noise and disturbance contrary to ALP1 Policies S2, S31 and S32 which seek to protect the amenity of residents.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, having had regard to the development plan as a whole and all other material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Katherine Robbie

INSPECTOR