



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 July 2022

by Sarah Manchester BSc MSc PhD MEnvSc

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8th August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/M0933/D/22/3299583

Steelecroft, Hutton Roof, Carnforth, LA6 2PG

- 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 Peter Prickett against the decision of South Lakeland District Council.
 - The application Ref SL/2021/0669, dated 29 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 4 April 2022.
 - The development proposed is alterations and extensions to dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Background and Preliminary Matters

2. Planning permission (ref SL/2020/0651) was granted in 2020 for conversion of barn into single dwelling, associated external works and installation of septic tank. That scheme originally included extensions to create a 4 bed dwelling, but the Council accepted amended plans during the processing of the application for a 2 bed dwelling without extensions. Correspondence between the parties at that time indicates that, subject to permission being granted, the appellants intended to apply subsequently to extend the building.
3. The permission has been implemented but the development has not been completed. At the time of my visit, the building was surrounded by scaffolding, the roof covering was not complete and windows and doors had not been fitted in the external openings. While services have apparently been provided to the building, the evidence indicates that internal works including plumbing and wiring are not complete. Therefore, while I have taken the description of the development from the planning application form in the banner heading above, I have determined the appeal on the basis that the building does not provide the facilities required for day-to-day private domestic existence and the residential use has not commenced.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the traditional building and the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal relates to a traditional stone barn with a pitched slate roof. It is a simple agricultural vernacular building located in the countryside to the north of the small rural settlement of Hutton Roof. It is well separated from nearby

buildings and it is surrounded by agricultural land. Access from the road is via Shortbutts Lane, which also functions as a public right of way (the footpath). The building is readily visible from the footpath which continues along the western edge of the appeal site close to the appeal building.

6. The proposal would be a part 2 storey and part single storey extension. The 2 storey side extension would have a pitched roof finishing below the host ridge line, and it would be set back behind the main north facing elevation. When viewed from the north, the side extension would be subservient to, and it would respect, the traditional building elevation. However, the extension would be significantly deeper than the side elevation of its host and it would wrap around the full width of the south facing rear elevation. The rear roof slope would be continuous with the main 2 storey roof. Consequently, the entire proposal would be a significantly large extension that would be disproportionate in scale and it would overwhelm the simple traditional building.
7. Accordingly, the proposal would not be a sympathetically converted traditional building with subservient extensions. It would be a substantial and predominantly new detached dwelling in the countryside. It would not be assimilated as part of a farmstead or building group. In contrast to the modest and unassuming traditional building, the large footprint and bulk of the dwelling would be visually obtrusive and dominant in the secluded rural setting. Irrespective that the vernacular building may not be a heritage asset, its positive contribution to the locality in terms of history, distinctiveness and sense of place would be irreparably diminished by the proposed large scale extensions and alterations to the building.
8. Therefore, I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the traditional building and the countryside. It would conflict with Policies CS1.1, CS8.2 and CS8.10 of the South Lakeland Core Strategy Adopted October 2010 (the CS). These require, among other things, that proposals conserve and where possible enhance local distinctiveness and character and sense of place. It would conflict with policies DM1 and DM2 of the Council's Development Management Policies Development Plan Document Adopted March 2019 (the DMDPD) in relation to responding to local context, character and distinctiveness including by being well proportioned and in scale and avoiding dominant and incongruous extensions and alterations. On the basis that the traditional building is not in residential use and it is not capable of conversion to a 4 bed dwelling without significant extension and alteration, the proposal would also conflict with DMDPD policy DM16. It would conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) in relation to being sympathetic to local character and history and maintaining a strong sense of place.
9. In its decision notice, the Council refers to conflict with CS policy CS8.8. However, this policy relates to surface water and flooding and I have not found conflict with it.

Other Considerations

10. It was always the appellants' intention to construct a large family dwelling in this location. However, during the processing of the earlier application, the Council advised that as extensions to the traditional building would not comply with DMDPD policy DM16, they would only be considered appropriate subject to a subsequent planning application to extend the dwelling. The appellants

understood from this that a planning application for extensions would be approved and they are understandably disappointed with the Council's decision. However, the Council's advice was in relation to the acceptability of the earlier proposal and it does not appear to be formal pre-application advice, nor does it confer acceptability on any subsequent scheme to extend the building such as would in any case need to be considered on its individual merits.

11. The proximity to the family's farm would be convenient for the appellants. However, the proposal would not be an agricultural workers dwelling. Moreover, while there may be limited housing availability locally due to a high demand for second homes and holiday accommodation, the proposal would be an unrestricted market dwelling and it would not be an affordable or a local occupancy dwelling. There are limited services and facilities in the area and consequently little evidence that the location would minimise the need to travel. The market status of the dwelling, the rural location and the appellants' personal circumstances carry little weight in favour of the scheme.
12. The solar panels, air source heat pump and electrical vehicle charging point would contribute towards the sustainability and climate change mitigation aims of the Framework and the development plan. However, there is little evidence that these measures would be reliant upon the appeal, or that the proposal would be an outstanding or innovative design that promotes high levels of sustainability or helps raise the standard of design more generally in the area. In terms of landscape planting, the permitted scheme already includes a native species hedgerow. As the wildflower meadow and small woodland appear to be outside of the appeal site, there would be no guarantee that these would be delivered or retained as part of the scheme. The design and the planting proposals carry little weight in favour of the proposal.
13. The 2 bed dwelling under construction would not provide adequate internal living accommodation for a large family. Nevertheless, the evidence indicates that it would meet the Technical housing standards - nationally described space standard Adopted March 2015 for a 2 bed 3 person dwelling. As it would provide a reasonable standard of living accommodation for a single person, couple or small family, the small size of the permitted dwelling does not provide a justification for a larger 4 bed dwelling.
14. The evidence indicates that the works are at an advanced stage and there is little evidence the building would not be converted to residential use if the appeal should fail. Therefore, the proposal is not justified on grounds relating to the conservation of the traditional building.
15. There was historically a dilapidated corrugated metal lean to on the east elevation of the building. The evidence suggests that it was not of substantial or permanent construction and it was not suitable for conversion. I accept that the building could have been extended in the past when it was part of an agricultural holding, in which case it might have been capable of conversion to a large dwelling without the need for significant extension. Neither the demolished lean to nor theoretical historic permitted development provides a justification for the proposal.
16. My attention has been drawn to large barns with catslide roofs elsewhere in the area. Some of these are in agricultural use and some have been converted to residential use. There is little evidence that the catslide extensions were householder development or that residential conversions elsewhere were

considered in the same policy context. The existence of different styles and sizes of traditional building in different surrounding contexts does not provide a justification to extend the traditional building in this case.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations that would outweigh that conflict.
18. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

Sarah Manchester

INSPECTOR