



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 September 2022

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 October 2022.

Appeal Ref: APP/M2270/D/22/3295703

Stream View, Golford Road, Cranbrook, Kent, TN17 3NT.

- 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 David Pearson against the decision of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/03688/FULL, dated 3 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 5 January 2022.
 - The development proposed is a detached domestic garage
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a detached domestic garage at Stream View, Golford Road, Cranbrook, Kent, TN17 3NT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/03688/FULL, dated 3 November 2021, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The outbuilding hereby approved shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwelling known as Stream View, TN17 3NT and it shall not be occupied as a separate unit of accommodation or as a holiday let.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans, drawings: 1B, 2B, 3A and the Design and Access statement.
 - 4) No development shall commence until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the garage hereby permitted together with details of the doors, window and rooflights have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
 - 5) The extension hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the first floor window in the southern elevation shall be fitted with glass that has been obscured to Pilkington level 3 or higher and shall be non-opening. Both the obscured glazing and the non-opening design shall be an integral part of the manufacturing process and not a modification or addition made at a later date, and once installed the window shall thereafter be retained unaltered.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue to be the effect of the proposed development on character and setting of the host dwelling and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Reasons

3. Stream View is a detached single storey dwelling with a detached annexe, dating from the 1980's. It is part of a former Historic Farmstead, now an enclave of four residential dwellings. The other properties in the cluster comprise a former oast, farmhouse and barn, that all surround a communal roundabout and common vehicular access. The appeal site is situated within High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and outside the limits of built development of any settlement in the Borough.
4. The appellant proposes the erection of a detached triple garage with a private fitness suite over. The proposed garage, that would be well screened from public view, would be vernacular in form and detail. A half-hip roof is proposed with three modest flat roof dormers to the rear and three roof lights to the front.
5. It is stated in the evidence before that the building would be constructed of local stock bricks, plain clay tiles, timber doors and coated metal frame windows. As I saw this palette of materials would be in keeping with the local vernacular. However, if this building is to relate well to the other buildings in this historic farmstead it is important that the materials are carefully selected. Accordingly, if I am minded to allow this appeal I would condition the final selection of the external materials, the design and finish of the roof lights, windows and doors.
6. Although, like the surrounding buildings, it would serve a domestic function it would nevertheless be typical of the form and character of former agricultural building found on a farmstead such as this. In itself the building would be quite large, however, I do not consider that it would be disproportionately large when compared the other buildings that make up the group.
7. The garage would be located some 35 metres or so from Stream View and its annexe and would be well screened by mature planting. Accordingly, it would therefore not impact upon it setting. However, given its location it would clearly appear as an integral part of the group of former farm buildings. Further it would be built in a space currently utilised for parking adjacent to the access drive serving the development, thereby reducing the number of cars parked in the open.
8. Finally, turning to the potential further use of the building, this is a matter that if I were minded to allow the appeal could be controlled by a suitably worded condition.
9. Regarding the foregoing, I conclude in respect of the main issue that, when considered in the context of the immediate surrounding development the proposed garage would appear as a modest structure. Due to its vernacular form, design and choice of materials it would not appear out of place in this former farmstead setting and having regard to the separation distance and surrounding mature landscaping it would not detract from the character and setting of the host dwelling and the AONB. Finally, subject to a condition to

control its future use I do not find that it would, because of its potential occupation as a separate dwelling, detract from the character and setting of the AONB.

10. The proposed garage would therefore accord with the aims of Policies LBD1 and H11 of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Local Plan (Adopted March 2006), Core Policies 4 and 14 of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Local Development Framework - Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted June 2010), the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Local development Framework - Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted June 2006), Para 176 of the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance as they relate, amongst other things, to the quality of development, the requirement for new development to be in keeping with existing surrounding properties and the need to conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB.

Conditions

11. The conditions follow from those suggested by the Council. To ensure a high quality development, I shall include a condition about the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building.
12. In the interests of certainty, I shall however impose a condition requiring the development to be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans.
13. To protect the character and appearance of the AONB I shall restrict, by condition, the use of the annexe to purposes ancillary to the main dwelling house as well as its use as an independent unit of accommodation or as a holiday let.
14. To ensure the private amenity of neighbouring occupiers to the south of the outbuilding hereby approved I shall require the proposed first floor window to be non-openable and obscure glazed.

Conclusions

15. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR