



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 August 2022 by G Sibley MPLAN MRTPI

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 December 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/E3715/D/22/3300611

White House Farm, Grandborough Road, Woolscott, Grandborough CV23 8DB

- 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 Richard Cooke against the decision of Rugby Borough Council.
 - The application Ref R22/0124, dated 4 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 April 2022.
 - The development proposed is proposed outbuilding.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site comprises a large, detached dwelling, which was erected as a replacement to the original farmhouse. A detached triple garage has been erected at a right angle to the front elevation. The plot includes a residential curtilage of some substance. The buildings are closely related and surrounded by otherwise open and undeveloped fields which contribute positively to the prevailing rural character of the area. The ethos of the appeal scheme is to create a traditional agrarian courtyard, siting a second outbuilding opposite the garage, also forward of the front of the dwelling.
5. To some degree, the aim of the scheme would be achieved albeit I remain concerned about the size of the outbuilding. It would be of a substantial land take in itself, insubordinate and would compete with the footprint of the house. This would not be completely out of the ordinary were this to be a collection of original buildings, but it is not. A fact emphasised by its width, which gives it something of a squat appearance against the more traditional verticality of the dwelling's design. There would also be a jarring and uncomfortable relationship between the extent and sheerness of the glazing and the fenestration pattern and rhythm in the dwelling which, whilst equally modern in itself, has taken a

more traditional approach to its elevations and opening to wall ratio. When teamed with the approved garage opposite, the cluster of buildings would, by virtue of their combined scale, design, spacing and features, exude a more urban feel to them, appearing as three disassociated buildings rather than being read as a whole, with only a physical material commonality between them. This would appear uncomfortable against the prevailing rurality of the wider area. In essence, each building has taken a slightly different approach to the agrarian theme, which would result in a confused and imbalanced group. Despite the use of front boundary treatment, the proposed building would be discernible due to its prominent frontage location.

6. When taken together, these elements would combine to be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. As such, there would be conflict with Policy SDC1 of the Rugby Borough Council Local Plan (2019) insofar as it expects proposals to be of a scale, density and design that respect the character of the areas in which they are situated. The proposal would also conflict with the advice set out in the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (2012) which states that outbuildings should be sympathetically related to the main dwelling. Finally, the proposal would not accord with the high quality and contextually appropriate principles of the general design policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) (the Framework).
7. I am mindful that as a generally open area, any additional planting would appear as a contrived attempt to 'hide' the building, an approach which should not be used as a substitute for appropriately designed developments. Moreover, landscaping should be used to mitigate an impact rather than seek to remove it altogether.

Other Matters

8. The appellant has demonstrated that, through the exercise of rights under Permitted Development (PD), an outbuilding of similar size could be erected in the plot and that this is a fallback position to the appeal scheme. It seems sufficiently clear that there is a greater than theoretical possibility that such a development would take place.
9. There would however be some difference between the two 'options'. Chief among which being that the PD building would be in a different location, to the side and behind the front elevation of the house and thus have a more recessive appearance in relation thereto. Whilst the PD scheme would have a larger footprint than the proposed outbuilding, it would be similar in depth while still much narrower than the house itself and this would better reflect the scale of the host dwelling than the proposed outbuilding.
10. In addition, and if planning permission was granted for the appeal scheme, both outbuildings could feasibly be built on site without affecting the physical implementation of the other. No sufficiently robust mechanism has been put to me to prevent this. A planning condition would not be reasonable. The appellant or any future owner of the property could build a PD scheme before implementing any planning permission, which would be the trigger point for a condition to come into effect. Given this and the other issues identified above, I would ascribe limited weight to the fallback position.

11. The proposal would provide a gym as well as more internal living space. However, this would be a private benefit for the appellant and as such I give this consideration very limited weight. The proposal would also include additional tree and landscaping planting around the site's boundaries. This would provide some improvements to the biodiversity of the site as well as the natural environment but given the limited scale of what is proposed and what it would ultimately seek to achieve, I would also afford it limited weight.

Conclusion and Recommendation

12. The proposal would conflict with the development plan and the material considerations would not, in this instance, be worthy of sufficient weight to indicate that the appeal should be determined other than in accordance with it. Therefore, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Sibley

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR