



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2023

by Sarah Manchester BSc MSc PhD MEnvSc

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/G0908/D/22/3308230

Skiddaw View, Kirkland Farm, Wigton, Cumbria, CA7 0LH

- 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 Mark Payne against the decision of Allerdale Borough Council.
 - The application Ref HOU/2022/0155, dated 8 August 2022, was refused by notice dated 30 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is to replace existing double glazed windows and doors.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Background

2. Planning permission (ref 2/2004/0089) was granted in 2004 for conversion of barn to dwellings at Kirkland Farm. A condition imposed on the permission removes permitted development rights in relation to extensions or alterations to the building in the interests of the appearance of the site.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the area.

Reasons

4. Skiddaw View is a semi-detached dwelling occupying part of a former barn. Although not a listed building or in a conservation area, it is part of a historic farmstead in the open countryside comprising a farmhouse and several barns converted to residential use. The converted barns, including the appeal property, retain their traditional character and appearance. This is in part due to the sympathetic retention of historic fabric, the original window and door openings and the understated and substantially matching design of the fenestration and doors. The variation in the colour of the window surrounds and doors between the various converted barns does not detract from the harmonious historic farmstead character. Moreover, while the windows and doors in the group are not original, wood is a traditional building material which, together with the repeating simple design, makes a positive contribute to local distinctiveness and sense of place.
5. The proposal would be wood effect composite doors and wood effect double glazed uPVC windows finished in a golden oak colour. There would be no alterations to the depth of the recesses or the rebates. Brochure details have been provided to illustrate sculptured sash windows with glazing bars and a

solid composite door with a long vertical bar handle. By email to the Council, the appellant states that the windows would be casement windows with a single side opening except for non-opening windows which would be replaced like-for-like. Although not illustrated, doors would have traditional handles and the rear door would have a spy glass as it currently has.

6. The principal elevation of Skiddaw View faces into the farmstead and it is in close proximity to adjoining and nearby historic buildings. While there may be limited views of the principal elevation from public land, it is an integral part of the farmstead group. Moreover, the long rear elevation of the converted barn that includes Skiddaw View is prominent in public views from the adjacent road. Therefore, proposed alterations have the potential to adversely affect the barn and the farmstead group.
7. While the evidence suggests that the proposed windows and doors would be similar in design to the existing, the proposal would introduce modern and incongruous materials into the external finish of the historic barn. The evidence, including the brochure photographs, does not demonstrate that the proposal would be consistent with the existing windows and doors in the appeal building. Irrespective of the wood effect finish, the uPVC would have an artificial texture and a more uniform sheen that would not age or weather in the same way as painted timber. Consequently, the proposed windows and doors would be more prominent and conspicuous than the existing. The contemporary materials would diminish the strong historic identity of the barn and the group. The proposal would not make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness or sense of place.
8. uPVC windows have been used elsewhere in the area. In this regard, the uPVC windows and doors in the nearby farmhouse demonstrate the urbanising effect of unsympathetic and incongruous modern materials in traditional buildings. Irrespective that the alterations to the farmhouse are lawful, neither they nor uPVC windows elsewhere provide a justification for the erosion of the strong rural vernacular character of the appeal property barn and farmstead group.
9. Therefore, I conclude that the proposal would harm the traditional rural character and appearance of the appeal property and the area. It would conflict with Policies S4, DM14, DM15 and S27 of the Allerdale Borough Council Local Plan (Part 1) Strategic and Development Management Policies Adopted July 2014. These require, among other things, that proposals respect, conserve and respond positively to local character, history and distinctiveness, and that external materials should be appropriate to their context and not adversely alter the appearance of the building or the area. It would conflict with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework in relation to being sympathetic to local character and history and maintaining a strong sense of place.

Other Matters

10. I note the suggestion that uPVC and composite materials would improve energy efficiency and security, enhance the appearance of the building and help maintain the fabric of the dwelling. However, while the existing wooden windows and doors may be in a poor state of repair, there is little evidence that they could not be refurbished or that similar benefits could not in any case be achieved by alternative wooden windows and doors. It has not been demonstrated that replacement wood would be economically unviable or that it could not be maintained. There is little evidence that the use of sustainably

sourced wood in building contributes to global deforestation or that the manufacture of plastics is a more sustainable practice.

Conclusion

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

Sarah Manchester

INSPECTOR