



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 February 2023

by H Miles BA(hons), MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/M3645/D/21/3288983

The Barn, Heathfield Farm, Bonnys Road, Reigate Heath, Reigate RH2 8RL

- 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 Bob Brown against the decision of Reigate and Banstead District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/02138/HHOLD, dated 4 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 11 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is link extension between annex and main house.
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Decision

1. This appeal is dismissed

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, with particular regard to the locally listed building.

Reasons

3. The Barn was originally an agricultural barn which has been converted to residential. It is mostly single storey, with a limited two storey element, arranged around a courtyard and mainly constructed in brick and timber with pitched roofs. The front door to the main house is within the internal courtyard. It has a separate single storey annexe, with a front door onto the driveway.
4. The property is a locally listed building and is therefore a non-designated heritage asset. Its features of significance include its traditional, historic agricultural appearance which dates back to the 17th Century. The property has been converted to residential use and this is clearly apparent from the surrounding domestic garden, driveway and paraphernalia as well as the limited number of windows to the external elevations. Nevertheless, its traditional form, scale, appearance and features including the barn doors mean that its previous agricultural use remains evident. The host property therefore has a modest degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions.
5. The proposed development would introduce a modern two storey addition. It is proposed in Corten steel and with large areas of glazing and an irregular, sloping form which would extend beyond the front and rear building line at first floor. The two storey height and projecting cantilevered first floor, along with the contrasting materials would result in a dominant and highly conspicuous addition. Whilst steel may be used in some agricultural buildings it does not appear to be prominent at this property. Although the proposed height would

be lower than the two storey ridge it would nevertheless be taller and therefore harmfully dominant compared to the single storey height of the majority of the property. The proposed extension would therefore harmfully detract from the important traditional agricultural characteristics of the existing property. For these reasons there would be significant harm to the character and appearance of the non designated heritage asset.

6. Whilst the extension would not be easily visible from the highway, it would nevertheless be seen from the bridleway that runs alongside and from the nearby Old Schoolhouse. As such, this harm would be experienced.
7. Although the heritage significance of the property is modest, nevertheless the significant extent of the harm is such that the effect on the non designated heritage asset would be unacceptable.
8. I am presented with other examples of contemporary extensions. However, these do not appear to be to agricultural barns. As such their circumstances do not appear to be similar to the case before me now and therefore they do not alter my assessment of the particular details of this case.
9. Consequently, the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area, with particular regard to the locally listed building. As such it would be contrary to Policies DES1, and NHE9 of the Reigate and Banstead Local Plan Development Management Plan (2019). Together these require development to protect, preserve, and wherever possible enhance non-designated heritage assets, with a balance between the extent of harm or loss and the significance of the asset. As well as seeking high quality design that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of its surroundings.
10. Policy NHE6 mainly relates to the reuse or adaptation of buildings to support the rural economy in the Green Belt. The proposed development is for an extension to an existing dwelling. Therefore, the policies set out above are more relevant to this main issue.

Other Matters

11. The proposed development would create a new entrance and would link the existing barn and annex. However, I observed that the existing entrance was not unduly difficult to locate and any improvements in these regards are mainly private benefits for the existing occupiers. I understand that the extension could be removed without effecting the existing fabric. Nevertheless, planning permission is sought for a permanent alteration to the building and as such this does not weigh in the scheme's favour.
12. The Barn is in the Green Belt. It is not in dispute between the main parties that the appeal scheme would not be inappropriate development and I have no reason to disagree with this. As such, this does not affect my conclusions.

Conclusion

13. The appeal scheme does not accord with the development plan and there are no other considerations to indicate that the appeal should be determined otherwise. Therefore, for the reasons given above, I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

H Miles

INSPECTOR