



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 February 2023

by Elaine Moulton BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/D/22/3308148

Alizarin, Grappenhall Ridge, Broad Lane, Grappenhall and Thelwall, Warrington WA4 3HS

- 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 George Critchley against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
- The application Ref 2020/38199, dated 14 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 15 July 2022.
- The development proposed is described as 'We have proposed an elegant and slimline extension due to historical, Green belt and Open Countryside sensitivities. A green living roof has been proposed promoting sustainability which will also assist to sensitively extend into the open countryside.

A contemporary timber frame with bespoke steel pin joint connections will be used to support the roof and structural glazing maximising the natural light and open countryside views.

The proposal is for a small single-story sunroom rear extension to a converted barn. We have designed the extension so there is minimal disruption to the existing barns fabric providing a glazed connection walkway into the extension. The extension has been sensitively designed to have minimal disruption to the fabric and surrounding area.'

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single-storey sunroom rear extension at Alizarin, Grappenhall Ridge, Broad Lane, Grappenhall and Thelwall, Warrington WA4 3HS in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2020/38199, dated 14 November 2020, 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 development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site Local Plan; EL-0001 Rev P1; GA-0002 Rev P1; SK-0001 Rev P1; SK-0002 Rev P1; and SP-0001 Rev P1.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have amended the description of development in the decision above from that set out in the last bullet point of the banner heading, which has been taken from the planning application form. The amended description leaves out wording that is unnecessary to describe the development.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to a former barn of brick construction that has been converted into several dwellings. The surrounding area is open countryside interspersed with sporadic housing and agricultural buildings. The mature hedges and fragmented pattern of development along Broad Lane, with agricultural land beyond, give the surrounding area an intrinsically rural character. Some alteration has been carried out to convert the barns into residential use, nevertheless their agricultural lineage remains legible and contributes to the rural character of the area.
5. The design and appearance of the proposed sunroom extension would contrast with the rural character of the barn; however, the original form and openings of the building would remain. The proposed green roof would partially obscure a circular pitch hole to the barn when facing the rear elevation. Nevertheless, it is fully retained, and the glazed link would ensure that it would be seen in full in certain views. Otherwise, the fabric and form of the existing rear elevation would be visible due to the lightweight, glazed nature of the extension and link.
6. The simple rural character of the barn conversion would be retained, and its simple original appearance and use would remain legible. I acknowledge that there are currently no extensions on the outer elevations of the building facing towards the open countryside. It is, nonetheless, apparent that the building is now in residential use given the domestic paraphernalia within the garden. The domestic appearance of the main dwelling, as a consequence of the proposal, would not change to the extent that it would be detrimental to its appearance.
7. Rather than detract from it, I consider that the high quality, contemporary appearance and modest scale of the extension would complement the existing building. It would be seen as part of the evolution of a building which is no longer used for the same purposes as it was initially intended.
8. Given the location of the extension to the rear of the dwelling which itself is in a rear section of the building, it would not be visible from Broad Lane. Therefore, any public views of the extension, other than from the adjoining dwelling, would be from a considerable distance and seen through intervening features including the rear boundary hedge to the property. I consider, therefore, that the proposal would not have a significant or negative impact on the defined local character or rural setting.
9. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the surrounding area. Accordingly, I find no conflict with Policies QE7 and CC2 of the Local Plan Core Strategy which seek to ensure, amongst other things, that proposals reinforce local distinctiveness and relate satisfactorily to its rural setting. In addition, it would follow the guidance set out in the Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document regarding the need for openings, that are essential to the original purpose, being read clearly after conversion.

Conditions

10. In addition to a time limit condition, I have considered it necessary to attach a condition specifying the approved plans, in the interests of certainty.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, having regard to the development plan as a whole and all relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Elaine Moulton

INSPECTOR