



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 February 2023

by K Allen MEng (Hons) MArch PGCert ARB

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/C3430/D/22/3308395

2 Longridge Farm, Levedale Road, Longridge, Stafford ST18 9AL

- 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 & Mrs Graham Cook against the decision of South Staffordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00451/FUL, dated 11 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 19 July 2022.
 - The development proposed is rear garden room extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area with particular regard to the host property as a non-designated heritage asset.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within open countryside, with a limited number of surrounding properties. It is a single storey dwelling forming part of a larger barn conversion scheme comprising a range of simple linear buildings in an L-shaped form. The previous conversion has maintained the agricultural appearance of the structures including limited openings and attractive projecting brick eaves detailing.
4. The appeal building's significance lies in its robust, linear and simple form, use of traditional materials, its connection to the wider group of buildings and their association with agriculture.
5. While the parties agree that the proposed increase in floor area would be proportionate and that the proposal would not be seen from any public area, due to its projection out from the rear of the building and its width, the extension would unbalance and would be incongruous with the existing narrow, linear structure. Further, although the large areas of glazing would result in the garden room being distinguishable from the original building, the proposal's scale and form would appear domestic and due to its height, the flat roof of the structure would awkwardly abut the eaves, intersecting the existing eaves detailing and interfering with the building's strong horizontal emphasis. Consequently, in my judgement the garden room would be incompatible with and would detract from the simplicity of the existing structure. It would be harmful to the agricultural character of the property and the wider building

group and hence the significance of the property as a non-designated heritage asset.

6. Whilst I appreciate the need to work from home, I have no substantive evidence that the proposed extension, which does not expressly indicate the creation of a home working space, is the only way to provide the required accommodation. In any case this matter does not outweigh the harm I have identified.
7. Overall, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area with particular regard to the host property as a non-designated heritage asset. This would conflict with Policies EQ3, EQ4 and EQ11 of the South Staffordshire Council Core Strategy (December 2012) which collectively requires the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and that new development respects rural and local character and distinctiveness. The proposal would also conflict with the South Staffordshire Design Guide (2018) where it seeks to ensure the simplicity of barns are maintained with minimal fussy adornments so as not to disguise the buildings history. Similarly, it would conflict with the Framework which seeks to ensure developments are sympathetic to local character and history.

Other Matters

8. The appeal site forms part of the setting of the adjacent Grade II listed property, Longridge House. In accordance with the statutory duty imposed by section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, I have had special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of the listed building in the determination of this appeal. The rural, agricultural outlook contributes to its significance. Despite the likely, previous association of the barn to the listed property, due to the intervening brick boundary wall, existing 1980's extension and limited height of the proposal there would be no harm to the setting of the listed building.
9. I recognise that there have been no objections raised by neighbours in relation to the proposed development, but this does not alter my conclusions on the main issue.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations, including the Framework that would outweigh the conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

K Allen

INSPECTOR