
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 March 2023

by Penelope Metcalfe BA(Hons) MSc DipUP DipDBE MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/D0840/D/22/3309140

Higher Manhay Barn, Higher Manhay Farm, Wendron, Helston, TR13 0NS

- 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 Ben Symes against the decision of Cornwall Council.
 - The application Ref PA22/03971, dated 25 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 27 July 2022.
 - The development proposed is extension to existing dwelling to meet growing family needs, including accessibility considerations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of extension to existing dwelling and conversion of garage to dwelling to meet growing family needs, including accessibility considerations at Higher Manhay Barn, Higher Manhay Farm, Wendron, Helston, TR13 0NS, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref PA22/03971, dated 25 April 2022, and the plans submitted with it, 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, all received 26/04/22: Site/location Plan 1002-A502, Existing 1002-A410, Existing 1002-A411, Existing and Proposed 1002-A503, Proposed 1002-A510, Proposed 1002-A520, Proposed 1002-A530, Proposed 1002-A531.
 - 3) The linked extension hereby approved shall only be occupied by members of the family, or non-paying guests, of the occupiers of the dwelling known as Higher Manhay Barn, Higher Manhay Farm, Wendron, Helston and shall not be used, sold or let at any time as a separate residential unit of accommodation.

Main issue

2. I consider that the main issue in this case is its effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a two storey stone barn with single storey lean-to element converted to residential use for holiday lets and a detached timber double garage and store. Adjacent to the entrance to the site is the historically

associated former farmhouse, a substantial two storey stone building. The group is in an isolated position in the open countryside with typical Cornish hedgerows marking the boundaries.

4. I consider that the relevant policies in this case include 2, 12, 13 and 24 of the Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010-2030 (the local plan). Policy 2 seeks to ensure that development is of a high design quality, having regard to the value and sensitivity of the landscape, and to protect heritage assets. Policy 12 promotes high quality safe and inclusive design in all development and the maintenance and enhancement of the county's distinctive natural and historic character, among other things. Paragraph 2.82 of the supporting text refers to the challenge of providing accessible and adaptable dwellings to serve the changing needs of residents over time. This is principally aimed at older people but can also be applied to the particular needs of residents of any age. Policy 13 also refers to the need for sufficient internal space to enable flexibility and adaptability, among other things. Policy 24 relates to the historic environment and seeks to protect the cultural distinctiveness of the rural environment, including non-designated assets and their settings.
5. The local plan policies are in line with the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (the Framework), particularly insofar as it relates to design, the protection of local natural and historic character and the provision of safe accessible places.
6. I consider that the proposed single storey link, while relatively large in floor area, would not be unduly disproportionate in the context of the existing built form of the converted barn and the garage/store. Most of it would have a flat roof, apart from the small pitched roof element in a corner to the west of the existing store. It would therefore appear relatively modest in height, mass and scale and would allow the form of the original barn to remain evident from all aspects, particularly as the proposed timber cladding would allow the stone walls of the main barn to stand out. It would only be readily visible in public views from the southwest across the adjoining field from where it would not appear as a dominant feature, but rather as a low simple structure of a style and proportions similar to that of an agricultural building.
7. The proposal would be a somewhat unusual form of extension to a converted barn, but in determining this appeal I have taken account of the requirements of the appellant and his family. It would provide long term safe and accessible accommodation for family members with particular needs and I understand it would make available a family dwelling elsewhere in the area. Personal circumstances rarely carry weight in favour of proposed development which would otherwise be unacceptable. However, in this instance, I find that the proposal would be acceptable and the circumstances add weight to my conclusion.
8. I have some reservations about the use of black painted timber cladding to the walls. I accept that this may be a common feature of buildings in the County, although the examples put forward by the appellant are at some distance from this site. I consider that it would make the structure more noticeable than if the timber were of a natural, unstained colour. However, this would not be sufficient reason on its own, to justify refusing the appeal.
9. I conclude that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the existing building or the wider area. It would not significantly change the

agricultural character of the original building or detract from its setting or its distinctiveness as a non-designated heritage asset. It would adapt an existing dwelling into safe, flexible and accessible accommodation for the changing needs of the appellant's family in the long term. In these respects it is consistent with local plan policies 2, 12, 13 and 24 and the guidance in the Framework.

10. For the reasons given above, the appeal is allowed.

Conditions

11. I have considered the conditions put forward by the Council, having regard to the tests set out in the Framework. A condition detailing the plans is necessary to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and for the avoidance of doubt. A condition restricting the occupation of the extension is necessary in order to protect neighbouring residents and ensure strict control over future separate residential use.

PAG Metcalfe

INSPECTOR