



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 October 2023

by E Dade BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th November 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/A1910/D/23/3320173

5 Home Farm, Park Road, Tring, Hertfordshire HP23 6QU

- 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 Dennis Raffety against the decision of Dacorum Borough Council.
- The application Ref 22/01080/FHA, dated 1 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 18 January 2023.
- The development proposed is the insertion of two rooflights and a light tunnel tube inlet on the south elevation roof.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the insertion of two rooflights and a light tunnel tube inlet on the south elevation roof at 5 Home Farm, Park Road, Tring, Hertfordshire HP23 6QU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 22/01080/FHA, dated 1 April 2022, 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: 100 *Plans as Existing*; 101 *Front Elevation as Existing and Section AA*; 102 *Rear and Side Elevations as Existing*; 103 *Location Plan*; 200 *Plans as Proposed*; 201 *Rear (South) Elevation as Proposed, Block Plan and Location Plan*.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal property is located in the Green Belt. The proposal will not increase the mass and bulk of the existing property. For this reason, the Council's assessment in its delegated report found the proposal would accord with development plan policies and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which serve to protect Green Belt land. From everything I have seen in submissions and on my site visit, I have no reason to disagree.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, including the Tring Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a former barn which has been converted to a dwelling. It is situated within a group of buildings which formerly comprised Home Farm

and is associated with the Tring Park estate. Whilst the complex does not contain listed buildings, it is located within the Tring Conservation Area (CA).

5. Since the appellant's statement refers to the Tring Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals 2019 (CA Appraisal), I have had regard to the CA Appraisal in my decision. The CA Appraisal describes the special architectural or historic interest of the CA as being derived from its character as a small market town which grew in the post-reformation period and visibly flourished in the early-nineteenth century. The CA Appraisal notes the town has a diverse architectural and historic character. An important aspect of the town's character comes from buildings from around 1900 associated with the patronage of Lord Rothschild and the architecture of William Huckvale, which is of a distinctive, vernacular revival style.
6. The buildings of the former Home Farm complex are all now converted to residential use. However, the CA Appraisal indicates that these component buildings of Tring Park form a very important part of the history, character and appearance of the CA and possess historic interest through their former function, their connection to Rothschild and Huckvale, and for their design and materials which link them to many other buildings in the town. The appeal property therefore makes a positive contribution to the significance of the CA.
7. The appeal property is situated in one corner of a group of converted barns arranged around a central courtyard. The form and layout of this group of buildings, along with materials and features such as the traditional wooden vents and finials atop the ridge of the plain tiled roofs, provide a clear reference to the former agricultural use of the buildings.
8. However, the converted barns have doors and windows typical of dwellings, and rooflights are common across roof slopes. Domestic paraphernalia such as flues, meter boxes, aerials and satellite dishes are visible along the exterior of buildings. Across the wider Home Farm complex is a tarmac access road, footway, demarcated parking bays, and maintained verges and planting. These features, together with the neatly landscaped central courtyard and front gardens with established planted borders, lawns, patio seating, and boundary treatments comprised of low hedges and fencing, provide a distinctly domestic appearance to the area.
9. Therefore, whilst there are prominent visual clues to its former agriculture use, the appeal property and its surrounding area is principally residential in character. Consequently, the proposed development, which would involve the insertion of roof lights and a lighting tube into the roof slope, would not be out of keeping with the appeal property's domestic appearance and would not alter its residential character.
10. The proposed development would be located on the roof slope at the rear of the appeal property. This roof slope is not visible from any public highway.
11. There is a glimpsed view of the roof slope beyond a driveway adjacent to No 3 from the access road serving the Home Farm complex. However, the proposed rooflights and lighting tube would be set into the roof slope. From this angle, viewed from the gable end, the proposed development would be barely discernible from the tiled roof plane.

12. Moreover, the roof slope is generally concealed from view from the private access road by a row of evergreen trees behind a tall brick wall. The proposal would therefore not normally be visible to users of the access road.
13. Were this vegetation ever removed, the proposed development would be revealed above the height of the boundary wall. However, I have no evidence to suggest the removal of trees would be likely. Even if trees were lost, the appeal property is located furthest from the access road and due to this distance, would not appear visually prominent.
14. Furthermore, from the access road there are other more prominent rooflights visible on roof slopes of other nearby dwellings. The proposed development would not therefore appear out of keeping with the residential character and appearance of buildings in the area.
15. The proposed development would occupy an otherwise unbroken section of roof slope and it has been put to me that the proposal would set a precedent for roof lights along rear roof slopes. However, as set out above, the appeal property's roof slope differs from the other dwellings in the area insofar as it is oriented away from publicly accessible locations and is generally screened from view. Therefore, I do not expect that allowing the appeal would set a precedent for other similar development.
16. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the area, and as such would have a neutral effect upon the significance of the CA. The proposal would therefore accord with Policy CS27 of the Dacorum Core Strategy 2013 which requires development to positively conserve and enhance the appearance and character of conservation areas. In addition, the proposal would satisfy paragraph 189 of the Framework which requires heritage assets be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.
17. S72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires I pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA. As set out above, the proposal would not harm, and thus would preserve, the character and appearance of the CA.

Conditions

18. In addition to the standard time limit of the planning permission granted, in the interests of certainty I have attached a condition specifying the approved plans.

Conclusion

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

E Dade

INSPECTOR