



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 April 2024

by A Hartley, LLB(Hons), Solicitor, MBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 May 2024.

Appeal Ref: APP/B3410/D/23/3334675

Hutts Barn, Stanton Lane, Ellastone, Ashbourne, DE6 2HD

- 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 W Woods against the decision of East Staffordshire Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is P/2023/00909.
 - The proposed development is for the construction of garage and storage loft ancillary to Hutts Barn, Ellastone.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction of garage and storage loft ancillary to Hutts Barn, Ellastone, in accordance with the terms of the application reference P/2023/00909 dated 8 August 2023 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 Location Plan: Location -1-12500A4.pdf; Proposed Block Plan: PRBlockRev2-1-500A4.pdf; Proposed Elevations: ProposedRev1-1-50A0p1.pdf; Proposed Floor and Roof Plans: PropRev1-1-50A0p2.pdf
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be used solely for purposes ancillary to the main dwelling, Hutts Barn, Ellastone and for no other purposes.
 - 4) The materials and finishes used in the development hereby permitted shall be in accordance with the details in the application reference P/2023/00909 dated 8 August 2023 to match those of the main dwelling, Hutts Barn, Ellastone.

Preliminary Matters

2. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has been updated since the parties' appeal submissions have been made. However, as the revisions do not affect the matters under consideration in this appeal (other than different paragraph numbering), it was not considered necessary to seek further comment.

3. The description given on the application form includes the words 'Resubmission' but as this is not a description of development, I have omitted it from the description of development.

Main Issue

4. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site lies within the open countryside. The host building is a five-bedroomed dwelling comprising converted barns, known as "Hutts Barn". The existing outbuilding to the north-east of Hutts Barn proposed to be altered is constructed from concrete block under a fibre cement roof. The building has no architectural or historic merit. The building lies within a former historic farmstead and though separate planning units, in terms of character and appearance Hutts Barn and Hutts Farmhouse read visually within the landscape as a group of associated former agricultural buildings in the open countryside.
6. The whole outbuilding would be faced in reclaimed local sandstone to match the main range at Hutts Barn. The fibre cement roof would be replaced by a steeper traditional roof clad in blue clay tiles to match Hutts Barn. The proposed alterations to the existing outbuilding, (which is in a more elevated position on the site), would result in a higher roof height than Hutts Barn.
7. Within the group of buildings, roof heights are varied across the historic farmstead. The large former farmhouse continues to dominate the group. In its context, Hutts Barn itself has been sympathetically converted so that it retains its subservience to the farmhouse. The proposed outbuilding would be subservient to the farmhouse in scale and add positively to the range of roof heights in traditional Staffordshire blue tile with steep ridges surrounding Hutts Barn.
8. I have had regard to the historic farmstead context of the group of buildings; the positive contribution made using traditional blue clay tiles and reclaimed sandstone, and the current detrimental effect of the appearance of the existing outbuilding on the character of the host building and the area. Even though the roof height of the proposal is higher than elements of Hutts Barn (the principal dwelling within the planning unit), in its context the outbuilding remains modest within the group and is designed for an ancillary purpose to Hutts Barn.
9. Even if conflict with Policy DP3 is found by virtue of its size and height in relation to Hutts Barn, I find such harm would be outweighed in this particular case by the positive contribution of the proposal to the character and appearance of the dwelling in its historic farmstead context and the surrounding open countryside area through use of traditional roof and facing materials (referenced in the East Staffordshire Borough Council's Design Guide)(DG). In this regard the proposal also accords with the design policies of the LP, namely DP1 and DP3.
10. From my observations on site, I find overall that the alterations to the existing outbuilding would improve the appearance of the group of buildings when viewed from the surrounding public vantage points.

11. Consequently, I find that the proposal complies with Policies SP24, DP1 and DP3 of the LP and the DG in terms of the positive impact of its design on the main building and the character of the area.

Other Matters

12. The Council refers to conflict with Policy SP1 and SP8 of the LP in the Notice of Decision. As these policies do not relate specifically to the main issue between the parties I have not referred to them in my decision.

Conditions

13. I have had regard to the conditions suggested by the Council. I have imposed a condition specifying the approved plans as this provides certainty. In the interests of the visual amenity of the area I have imposed a condition regarding materials. As the proposal lies within the open countryside in policy terms, I have imposed a condition to ensure that the building is used only as ancillary to the main dwelling.

Conclusion

14. Having taken into account all representations made, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed subject to conditions.

A Hartley

INSPECTOR