
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 March 2024

by K Reeves BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 June 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/K1128/D/23/3326026

Walfords Barn, Beech Torr Farm Service Road, Kingston, Devon TQ7 4HA

- The appeal is made under Section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Fallon against the decision of South Hams District Council.
 - The application Ref is 1434/23/HHO.
 - The development proposed is single storey extension to existing dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. There are two planning appeals, both for the same site, but for materially different proposals. I have considered each proposal on its individual merits and the other appeal is the subject of a separate decision¹.
3. A revised National Planning Policy Framework was published on 19 December and updated on 20 December 2023. Whilst this made certain revisions to aspects of national planning policy, the provisions in respect of the matters relied on by the main parties are unchanged. Therefore, I did not need to consult with the main parties regarding the revised Framework.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the appeal building.

Reasons

5. Walfords Barn is a two storey barn conversion that was changed to residential use in the 1980s. It occupies part of a traditional stone barn with the other part occupied by another residential unit, High Barn. The site forms part of a group of traditional stone barns that have also been subject to conversion to residential units.
6. The proposed extension would occupy the entire gap between the side elevation of Walfords Barn and a stone boundary wall. This would involve the wall being incorporated into the extension. By extending entirely to the wall, despite its height being subservient to the appeal building, it would result in a substantial addition to the former agricultural building that would overly elongate its linear layout and detract from its simple and well-proportioned

¹ Appeal reference APP/K1128/D/23/3332076

overall form. This would be further exacerbated by the front and rear elevations of the extension not being sufficiently set back from the outer faces of the appeal building.

7. The extension would be finished in natural stone with detailing such as brick arches above openings to match the materials and appearance of the appeal building. I acknowledge that the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance 'Barn Guide: Traditional Farm Buildings, Their Adaption and Re-use' (the 'Barn Guide') indicates that traditional or contemporary extensions can both be potentially acceptable, and the appellants therefore felt that a traditional appearance would be acceptable. However, the design and material finish of the extension would be seen as a pastiche of the appeal building and thereby compromise the integrity and legibility of its traditional character and historic purpose. Moreover, the extension would have a separate roof structure that would have a visibly detached relationship with the appeal building and this would unbalance the simple proportions of the existing barn conversion and result in an undue visual detracton from the appeal building.
8. The appellants submit that reducing the size of the extension would leave a narrow gap between the extension and the boundary wall, which may become unusable space and result in the side windows facing on to the boundary wall. It is also argued that the extension would result in an increase in floor area of less than 50%, in line with the guidance of the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 2020 (the SPD). I understand and accept the appellants' reasoning as they have sought to follow the available guidance, but it does not resolve or override the identified issues with the overall massing and bulk of the proposal and its design and external materials.
9. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the appeal building. Consequently, the proposal would conflict with Policies TTV29 and DEV20 of the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014 – 2034 (LP) and Policies KNP2 and KNP10 of the Kingston Neighbourhood Plan 2019 – 2034, which collectively seek, in part, to protect and improve the quality of the built environment, respect local character, safeguard local distinctiveness, extend buildings in an appropriate manner in terms of scale and design, and have proper regard to historic value. The proposal would also fail to accord with the guidance contained within the SPD and the 'Barn Guide', insofar as they seek to ensure that development maintains the standards and qualities of the building's character.
10. For the avoidance of doubt and without prejudice to my above findings, I do not find that Policy DEV23 of the LP is relevant to the determination of this appeal as the impact on the wider landscape has not been raised as an area of concern. Policies SPT1 and SPT2 of the LP are also not determinative as matters relating to sustainable development and sustainable linked neighbourhoods have not been raised as areas of concerns either.

Other Matters

11. I understand that the intention is to change the occupation of Walfords Barn from holiday accommodation to a family home, and that the extension would help to facilitate this. Whilst this would lead to a contribution to the local housing stock, the provision of a single dwelling would carry limited weight and would not outweigh the conflict with the development plan identified above.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

K Reeves

INSPECTOR