



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 December 2024

by Les Greenwood MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 December 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/F2415/D/24/3351723

Orchard Cottage, Hill Farm, Frolesworth, Leicestershire LE17 5EJ

- 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 M Brown against the decision of Harborough District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00586/FUL.
 - The development proposed is to add a single storey rear extension and make internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted to add a single storey rear extension and make internal alterations at Orchard Cottage, Hill Farm, Frolesworth, Leicestershire LE17 5EJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24/00586/FUL, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: ROC\892\PD\001B, ROC\892\PD\002, ROC\892\PD\003 and ROC\892\PD\004.
 - 3) The materials and finishes to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted, including the finishes of all new joinery, shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) The new flue and all new guttering and downpipes hereby permitted shall have a black finish and guttering shall be fixed direct to the brickwork without the use of fascia boards.

Preliminary matters

2. The site address listed on the application form includes the street address '*From Ullesthorpe Road to Hill Farm*'. This seems somewhat misleading, as maps and local street signs call the adjacent section of road 'Frolesworth Road'. I have therefore used the simplified address given on the Council's decision notice instead.
3. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on 12 December 2024, during consideration of the appeal. Having regard to the changes in the Framework and to the comparatively minor scale and nature of this appeal proposal, I consider that further consultation on this matter is not necessary.

Main issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the building and the local area.

Reasons

5. Orchard Cottage is a detached dwelling formed by the conversion of a small brick and slate agricultural building. It sits at the edge of a small group formed by a farmhouse and barn conversions, in an isolated position in the countryside. The proposal is to add a small single storey extension, projecting at a right angle to the existing rectangular building.
6. The Council is concerned that the extension would be at odds with the simple linear form of the building and have a more modern, domestic appearance, thus distorting the building's form, scale, massing and rural character. The Council's Development Management Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) advises that proposals for alterations to barn conversions will be treated in the same way as proposals to erect extensions to that building prior to its conversion. It says that they should follow the traditional form and should be small in scale, subservient to the original building and simple in character.
7. Although the proposed extension would depart from the linear form of the building, small right angled sections like this are not unusual on agricultural buildings. The extension would be small in scale, simple in form and set well down from the main roof so that it would be a minor, subservient part of the building. The original form of the building would remain legible. Openings and detailing would match the existing building, which is characterised in part by large glazed openings. The Council has not clarified which detailed aspects of the design it considers to be overly domestic. I find that the proposal would complement the existing rural character of the building.
8. The only public views of the extension would be from a public right of way over a hundred metres away, from which views would be partly screened by a shed, hedges and other planting. There would be no significant effect on public views.
9. I conclude that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the building and the local area. It accords with Harborough Local Plan 2011-2031 policies GD3 and GD8, the SPD and the Framework, which aim to secure high quality design that is sympathetic to the local vernacular, while allowing for minor extensions that are subordinate in scale and appearance to the existing building.
10. The appellant draws my attention to another appeal decision allowing an extension to a barn conversion elsewhere in the local area¹. That decision related to a different design on a different building. The key here is the careful assessment of the particular circumstances of each proposal. I have considered this proposal on its own merits, bearing in mind adopted policies and guidance.
11. I impose a condition specifying the relevant plans to provide certainty. Two further conditions regarding materials, finishes and guttering details are necessary to protect the character and appearance of the converted barn.

¹ APP/F2415/D/21/3279739

12. The proposal accords with the development plan for the area, taken as a whole. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Les Greenwood

INSPECTOR