



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 April 2025

by J D Clark BA (Hons) DpTRP MCD DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30th April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/G2435/W/24/3354311

58 Moor Lane Farm, Moor Lane, Coleorton, Leicestershire LE67 8FQ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant approval required under Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).
 - The appeal is made by Messrs A and B Webster against the decision of North West Leicestershire District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/01021/PNA.
 - The development proposed is conversion of existing agricultural building to create 6 No. residential dwellings at Moor Lane Farm, 58 Moor Lane, Coleorton LE67 8FQ.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Under Article 3(1), Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended (the GPDO), planning permission is granted for the change of use of a building, together with building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building, and any land within that building's curtilage, to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended. This is subject to conditions, limitations and restrictions set out in the Order. Paragraph Q2.(1) lists conditions under which an application must be made to the local planning authority as to whether prior approval will be required. Matters to consider include, criterion (f), the design or external appearance of the building. My determination of the appeal has been made on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed conversion on the design and external appearance of the building.

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to a steel framed agricultural building constructed with concrete panels and metal cladding with two large openings. It would appear to have been built fairly recently; the Council refer to it being built in the last year, pursuant to a planning approval in 2016 (Ref: 15/01188/FUL). The Council has not disputed its legality stating that the permission was lawfully implemented. I have no evidence to dispute this.
5. The appeal building is a large modern utilitarian rectangular building standing separate from other buildings to the north-east which comprise a complex of

converted / re-built farm buildings. The appeal site is surrounded on all four sides by open grassed land but with residential properties on the other side (north-north-west) off Moor Lane and to the south at The Rowlands. The building sits on its own in a large open field and therefore, is very prominent in its setting.

6. The proposed conversion would enclose the existing openings and insert window and door openings in the two long elevations, front and rear when viewed from Moor Lane. The conversion would create six one-bedroomed dwellings, with similar fenestration to the front and rear comprising doors, windows and roof lights.
7. Class Q allows development for a change of use, together with building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building to a dwellinghouse/s, up to a cumulative number not exceeding ten. New window and door openings would be necessary to benefit from Class Q, especially in a modern building such as this one. However, the number and size of the openings, their uniformity and modular appearance have limited architectural merit and domesticate the former agricultural building, removing any identity with its original agricultural design and intended function.
8. The proposal includes creating small areas of amenity space to the rear of each dwelling. These areas would be enclosed by timber post and rail fencing. I note that the provision of amenity space and timber post and rail fencing has been approved to the development to the north-east. Whilst I do not consider that the creation of a modest area of amenity space would itself be harmful, especially as it has been accepted nearby, the number of separated small amenity spaces would result in an overly domestic appearance. These small areas are shown to include space for bin storage and would very likely also be required for other domestic paraphernalia. In such small spaces, the total impact of the domesticity of the building would be especially apparent.
9. Consequently, the proposed conversion would have a harmful effect on the design and external appearance of the building.

Other Matters

10. The appellant refers to other examples where the Council or a Planning Inspector has approved the conversion of agricultural buildings to residential. Copies of elevation drawings have been submitted and I can see that various fenestration arrangements have been accepted. These include large openings. However, none of these are similar to the uniform rows of openings on both of the main elevations of the appeal building. I also have no information about the context of these example buildings. Therefore, I do not find them to be sufficiently similar to justify the appeal scheme.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

J D Clark

INSPECTOR