



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 May 2025

by **Megan Thomas K.C.** Barrister-at-Law

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/K0425/D/25/3362615

West Barn, West Street, Marlow SL7 2LS

- 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 John Harper against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application ref. is 24/07661/FUL.
 - The development proposed is a part single storey part two storey side extension to an existing two storey dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a part single storey part two storey side extension to an existing two storey dwelling at West Barn, West Street, Marlow SL7 2LS in accordance with the terms of planning application ref.24/07661/FUL dated 5 November 2024 subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the planning application hereby approved and with approved drawing numbers as follows: 2051-P-01, 2048-P-03 REV 01 & 2048-P-04 REV 01.
 - 3) Notwithstanding any note of materials already indicated, a schedule and/or samples of all surfacing materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any work to the finished surfaces of the development hereby permitted takes place. Thereafter, the development shall not be carried out other than in strict accordance with the approved details.

Main Issue

2. The appeal site is located within the Marlow Conservation Area. The main issue in the appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, Conservation Area 'CA' and nearby listed buildings.

Reasons

3. West Street is in the commercial and retail centre of Marlow. West Barn is a converted and extended barn, used as a dwellinghouse, with a feather-boarded exterior and clay tiled roof. It is located to the rear of no.31 West Street, which is a grade II* listed building, and it is within the former burgage plot of that listed building.

4. The burgage plot pattern of long narrow rear plots is evident along West Street. There are neighbouring and nearby listed buildings such as 29 West Street and 33 West Street which are both grade II* and there is 37 and 37A West Street which is grade II listed, and 3 storeys in height. These buildings clearly have individual interest and also group value.
5. Access to the appeal property is via a driveway off West Street. The main barn has two floors of accommodation and there are three single storey elements, one with a pitched roof and the other two with flat roofs. It has an internal open yard/amenity area and a separate walled area to the north nearer the listed building which is planned to be a garden. The listed building (no.31) has a right of access on foot from its rear, through the walled area to the refuse bins in the service yard by the appeal site. To the rear of the site the appeal building sits on the boundary of the Portland Gardens residential development which is set in landscaped gardens and is outside the CA.
6. The appeal proposal would, amongst other things, create an additional pitched roof form at first floor level which would be north of and parallel to the existing pitched roof. It would be shorter in length than the existing pitched roof. There would be a length of flat roof between the old and new roof forms.
7. The existing barn has a pitched roof orientated in a broadly east/west direction but on its northern side it has a catslide roof extension which is not at all sympathetic to the original profile of the barn. The single storey flat-roofed extensions protrude above the high boundary wall in a disharmonious fashion and the domestic windows in the north first floor elevation jar with the barn.
8. The proposal would echo the existing main roof pitch but would be legible in its own right owing to a bridging section. It would have charred black timber cladding and aluminium framed windows. It would improve the character of the original barn by removing the incongruous catslide element. A direct view of the barn (as is today) from the south would not be greatly different and its linear form would remain prominent. The ridge of the new first floor element would be marginally lower than the main roof ridge and would be physically separated from it, thereby allowing the new element to appear subservient to the original barn. At ground floor level the proposal would open up the walled area so that it can be easily utilised with the dwelling as an amenity area and revived from its current redundant state.
9. The appeal site has an extant planning permission dated 29 May 2024 (ref: 24/05769/FUL) for construction of a new perpendicular pitched roof which would cover the existing yard and create more living space. There is a 'more than theoretical' prospect of this planning permission being implemented and so I have treated it as a potential fallback development. The proposed new perpendicular pitched roof would be lower than the appeal proposal's new pitched element, however, overall, I consider the latter would be a design which would bring a better overall coherence and legibility to the site particularly in relation to the two single storey flat roofed elements which would be less prominent.
10. In considering both the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the wider CA, I have borne in mind the statutory duties (ss.66 & 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990) to pay special regard to preserving the settings of listed buildings having regard to their architectural or historic interest, and the duty to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA.
11. A strong contributor to the significance of this CA is the burgage plot pattern which can be glimpsed through openings in West Street where the presence of long boundary walls and rear outbuildings can be discerned. A small portion of the appeal site itself can be glimpsed from West Street and it can also be readily appreciated as part of the CA from outside the CA from private land.

12. The proposed development would not materially change these glimpses. The burgage plot would not reduce in size. It would remain identifiable chiefly from the narrow footprints of the buildings fronting West Street, but also from the remaining brick boundary walls. The proposal would not diminish an appreciation of the plots. The impact of the development on the setting of no.31 West Street would not be more or less harmful than that of the existing dwelling or the fallback development. I consider the proposal would have a neutral impact on the settings of all the nearby listed buildings and on the CA, which would have its historical significance preserved.
13. I therefore conclude that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the Conservation Area and would not harm the setting of any of the listed buildings in proximity to it. It would not be contrary to policies DM31, DM35 or DM36 of the Wycombe District Local Plan (adopted 2019) or the Householder Planning and Design Guidance SPD (2020).

Conditions

14. The Council suggested some conditions in the event that the appeal was successful. I have considered these in the light of Planning Practice Guidance. I have imposed a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans in order to avoid uncertainty. A condition requiring surfacing materials/samples to be approved in writing by the local planning authority is necessary to secure a good quality finish and a high quality development compatible with its surroundings.

Conclusion

15. Having considered all representations made, for the reasons given above, I allow the appeal.

Megan Thomas K.C.
Inspector