



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 October 2025

by Jonathan Price BA(Hons) DipTP DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D3505/D/25/3370606

Haywards Farm, High Town Green, Rattlesden, Suffolk IP30 0SX

- 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 and Mrs D May against the decision of Mid Suffolk District Council.
 - The application Ref is DC/24/03848.
 - The development proposed is conversion of existing domestic outbuilding to residential annex.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for conversion of existing domestic outbuilding to residential annex at Haywards Farm, High Town Green, Rattlesden, Suffolk IP30 0SX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DC/24/03848, 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 drawing nos 24/133 – 01 site and location plans, 24/133 – 02 as existing, 24/133 – 0.3 as proposed.
 - 3) The measures set out in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd., March 2025) including the Precautionary Method Statement for Great Crested Newts shall be followed during construction and all biodiversity enhancement measures provided prior to first occupation of the annex and thereafter retained.

Main Issue

2. Whether the proposal complies with the development plan strategy for the location of residential accommodation.

Reasons

3. The proposal relates to a quite large outbuilding near the entrance to a drive serving a detached rural dwelling set in spacious grounds. The outbuilding was quite recently built and resembles a traditional farm building, with a tiled roof and weather boarded sides. The proposal is to convert this to provide a two bedroom residential annex to the main farmhouse. The Council's refusal relates to the scheme being amenable to becoming a separate dwelling, with the necessary internal accommodation provided for independent occupation, a location well away from the host property and the availability of separate access and garden area. The harm found by the Council relates solely to the countryside location and the conflict

with Policy SP03 of the Part 1 Joint Local Plan¹ (JLP). This policy focuses new development to within defined settlement boundaries and planned allocations to secure a sustainable pattern of growth, with exceptions to this only where specified policies apply.

4. The Council finds conflict with JLP Policy LP02, which is specific to residential annexes. This is in regard to criteria b) and c), whereby the ease of physical subdivision to create separate curtilages would prevent convenient reintegration once the annex was no longer needed. Where an annex is acceptable, Policy LP02 seeks that planning conditions or obligations be imposed to limit the occupation for use as such and prevent the future use as a separate dwelling. Whilst the proposal could conveniently become an independent dwelling, that is not what is proposed.
5. Notwithstanding any conflict with JLP Policy LP02, the appellant has drawn my attention to the more applicable Policy LP03. This addresses conversions of buildings to ancillary use within the curtilage of residential dwellings. No conflict with the criteria in this policy has been identified and I am satisfied the proposal meets those of design quality, amenity, access and parking. Should there be a future proposal for use as an independent dwelling within a separate curtilage, then Policy LP04, addressing the conversion of redundant buildings to residential use, might support this anyway. However, this is not what is proposed and the annex accommodation specifically sought would satisfy policies SP03 and LP03 and thus comply with the JLP strategy over the location of residential accommodation.
6. The approval is for a proposal described in the application as a residential annex, so a condition restricting occupancy as such would not meet the test of necessity. Other than conditions applying the standard three year period for commencement and, for certainty, specifying the plans, only one further condition is required. This is to apply the measures and enhancements set out in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

Conclusion

7. For the reasons explained, the proposal would comply with the development plan strategy for the location of residential accommodation. Therefore, subject to the aforementioned conditions, I conclude the appeal succeeds.

Jonathan Price

INSPECTOR

¹ Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Part 1 November 2023