



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 August 2025 by E Clifford BA (Hons) MA

Decision by B Plenty BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6th November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/E3715/D/25/3364741

1 Chapel Barn, Grandborough Fields Road, Grandborough, Warwickshire CV23 8DT

- 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 Ian Barry against the decision of Rugby Borough Council.
 - The application ref is R24/1086.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single storey rear extension, a 1-and a half storey rear extension and the installation of 4 (no) dormer windows and other alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matters

3. I have used the description of development from the Council's decision notice in the formal decision above as it is more concise than that on the application form.

Main Issue

4. The main issues are:
 - a. the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling;
 - b. the effect of the proposed development on protected species;
 - c. whether any harm found would be outweighed by the personal circumstances put forward by the appellant.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site is a one and a half storey barn conversion. Understood to have been converted from a cow shed in the early C21, the dwelling sits within a private courtyard comprising of a converted chapel and other former agricultural buildings which have now been converted to residential properties. The former farmstead is accessed from a narrow private drive, opening into the former farmyard around which the properties are sited. The appeal site also benefits from a private rear garden, which backs onto open countryside. The former farmstead as a whole has

a very private character, and its location outside of the village of Grandborough offers a somewhat isolated feel.

6. The appeal site is a modest building constructed of red brick with a tile roof and its rectilinear orientation highlights its former use as a barn. It has retained the segmental brick arches which frame the doors and windows and there are rooflights in the roof. Whilst the building is not designated as a heritage asset, the Council consider that it has local heritage interest.

Character and Appearance

7. The proposed development would substantially increase the footprint of the appeal property, through the addition of a part single-storey and part one and half storey rear extension with balcony. The appeal property currently has an attractive linear form which is typical of such barn conversions, and this would be subsumed by the overly dominant extension. The resultant scheme would remove much of the traditional character that the property currently possesses.
8. The proposal would include the addition of dormer windows to both the front and rear elevation, replacing the existing rooflights. These would appear as an alien feature on a property of this style and would fail to preserve the integrity of the dwelling as a former agricultural building.
9. The rear extension would comprise of composite cladding, which would not reflect or enhance the character or appearance of the host dwelling. It would further highlight the increased mass of the dwelling as there would be a stark contrast in the materials of the new development and the existing structure. The appellant has suggested that they would be willing to alter this aspect to use reclaimed brick to lessen the impact. However, whilst brick would be a more sympathetic material its use would have only have a limited positive effect that would not outweigh the adverse effect of the overall form and scale of the proposal
10. The appellant has referred to the neighbouring property, 2 Chapel Barn, which has a two-storey vertical rear façade and have suggested that the proposed development attempts to mirror this. However, the form of the neighbouring development appears awkward and bulky. As such, this does not provide a positive local example of the form of development proposed. Also, whilst I understand that a garage between properties 1 and 2 have previously gained consent, the location and scale of this alternative type of development is not in evidence and it would, in any event, be quite different to the proposal. It does not therefore set a precedent for the proposed scheme.
11. The cumulative impact of the proposals would result in a wholly unacceptable level of harm to the host dwelling by virtue of the domineering and unsympathetic design.
12. Therefore, I conclude that the proposed development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling. It would thus fail to comply with Policy SDC1 of the Rugby Borough Council Local Plan (2019) (LP) which requires development to respond positively regarding scale, density, and design to the character of the area. Furthermore, it would also fail to comply with the Rugby Borough Council Climate Change & Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2023) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Ecology

13. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Circular 06/2005 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System), paragraph 99 states that ‘it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision’.
14. The Council’s delegated report confirms that a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal regarding bats and birds has been requested following consultation with Warwickshire County Council Ecology; this has not been submitted. The appellant has stated that the Council have confirmed in writing that a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal regarding bats is no longer considered necessary, however this document has not been shared with me.
15. Given the rural nature of the appeal site, the close proximity to the dense vegetation at the rear of the property, combined with the nature of the appeal site as a former agricultural building, the Council’s ecologist has concluded that the site would be a suitable location for bats and nesting birds. I have not been provided with any evidence which would incline me to disagree with this view.
16. I therefore conclude that the proposed development has the potential to cause harm to protected species and nesting birds. As such, there would be conflict with LP Policy NE1 which seeks to protect species of international, national, and local importance for biodiversity and geodiversity. It would also be contrary to the clear intentions of the National Planning Policy Framework and Circular 06/2005 to avoid significant harm to biodiversity.

Personal Circumstances

17. Paragraph 12 of the Framework confirms, amongst other things, that the development plan is the starting point for decision making and where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan, permission should not usually be granted.
18. I have given due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which sets out the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. I have also had regard to the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998.
19. In these respects, I am aware that the appellant has a dependant family member with ongoing communication and mobility needs. The appellant has indicated that the proposal would provide an increase in roof height to allow for the installation of a standard half landing stair set to suit these mobility needs. I have no reason to doubt that this would be the case and that, in this regard, the proposal has the potential to be beneficial to the appellant. This is a personal circumstance to which I afford weight in favour of the appeal.
20. However, the proposal is not just for improvements to access of the first floor, and it is clear that some of the proposed development would go beyond the requirements

of the indicated family member. Furthermore, there is nothing to suggest that suitable access and accommodation for the specified family member could not be provided through a scheme that is more sympathetic to the character and appearance of the host dwelling. In weighing the personal circumstances in the balance, this has to be considered against the unacceptable effect that the development would have on the character and appearance of the property.

21. Overall, a refusal of planning permission is a proportionate and necessary approach to protecting the character and appearance of the appeal site. Furthermore, the protection of the public interest cannot be achieved by means that are less interfering of the specified family member's human rights and the personal circumstances put forward in this instance do not outweigh the unacceptable effects of the proposal

Other Matters

22. The appellant has referred to the existing spiral staircase and rooflights not complying with Building Regulations having regard to fire escape management. Having considered this matter, it does not outweigh the harm I have found above.
23. I note that the occupier of Chapel Barn, a neighbouring property, has voiced their support for the proposed development. However, this also does not overcome the harm that I have found.
24. The Council's handling of the planning application is not a matter that can influence my assessment of the proposal which relates to its planning merits considered against the development plan.

Conclusion and Recommendation

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

E Clifford

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

26. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

B Plenty

INSPECTOR