



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 November 2025

by **B Pattison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/X1545/W/25/3366022

Goat Lodge Farm, Goat Lodge Road, Great Totham, Essex CM9 8BX

- 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 John Doubleday against the decision of Maldon District Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00047/FUL.
 - The development is Conversion of existing art studio into 1 bedroom annexe ancillary to the main dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for conversion of existing art studio into 1 bedroom annexe ancillary to the main dwelling at Goat Lodge Farm, Goat Lodge Road, Great Totham, Essex CM9 8BX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/00047/FUL, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions within the attached schedule.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are linked in their consideration. They are whether the proposal would constitute a separate unit of residential accommodation and whether it would amount to the construction of a new residential unit in the countryside.

Reasons

3. The appeal site contains a large, detached dwelling, set within expansive grounds, with several outbuildings surrounding it. The outbuilding which is the subject of this appeal is located between the main house and Goat Lodge Road. The appeal site is located outside a defined settlement boundary, within the countryside.
4. My attention has been drawn to the Council's Specialist Needs Housing Supplementary Planning Document (2018) (SPD) which provides guidance in relation to residential annexes, and includes a series of requirements for this type of development. With regard to these, the existing single storey building is clearly subservient and subordinate to the large, main house within the grounds. The proposal would not involve the physical subdivision of the existing curtilage and would continue to share a vehicular access with the main dwelling. The outbuilding is also located in relatively close proximity to the main house.
5. The existing garden areas and driveway would be retained and shared with the annex. I have no substantive evidence to indicate that the annex would not be within the same ownership as the main dwelling, or that it could not be used, at a later date, as an integral part of the main dwelling. Whilst there may be other

outbuildings closer to the main dwelling, I have not been directed to any policy requirement that the conversion of these should be explored from the outset.

6. The appellant confirms that the annex would allow for the accommodation of a family member as the current occupants are elderly and would like to have their son and his family on site to provide assistance. This would maintain a functional link between the annex and main dwelling.
7. The appellant has made it clear that the proposal is for an annex which would not be occupied as an independent dwelling. Nonetheless, it would provide a kitchen, bathroom, bedroom and living space. Therefore, I recognise that allowing the appeal could result in pressure for the building to be used as a separate dwelling at some point in the future. However, this would require planning permission in its own right, and I am satisfied that a condition could be implemented to ensure that the occupation of the unit would remain ancillary to the occupation of the main dwelling, whilst remaining in the same ownership. This would secure appropriate occupation of the unit in the future. Indeed, the SPD recommends the use of planning conditions to ensure that the annex is used solely as accommodation ancillary to the main dwelling and cannot be disposed of separately.
8. For all these reasons, the annex would be justifiably used in connection with the main dwelling, and would not result in the creation of a separate unit of residential accommodation. Accordingly, the proposal would not amount to the construction of a new residential unit in the countryside. The proposal would comply with policies D1, S8 and H4 of the Maldon District Local Development Plan (2017), insofar as they require that the countryside be protected for its intrinsic character and beauty, and that development is design-led and respects and enhances the character and local context.
9. The proposal would also comply with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) in relation to the development of isolated homes in the countryside. As set out above, the proposal would also comply with the SPD guidance in relation to the design and use of residential annexes.

Conditions

10. The Council has suggested a set of conditions in the event that the appeal is allowed. In imposing conditions, I have had regard to the tests within the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance and have accordingly amended the wording of certain conditions proposed by the Council without altering their aim.
11. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have imposed a condition requiring compliance with the relevant plans. This is in the interests of certainty.
12. I have imposed a condition requiring that the proposed development is used only for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwelling known as Goat Farm Lodge. This is for the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the building is used as proposed and assessed above. In the interests of character and appearance I have imposed the suggested condition requiring the external materials to be those identified within the drawings and planning application form.
13. I have not imposed the Council's suggested conditions relating to a biodiversity enhancement strategy, and contamination. This is because I have no substantive evidence to suggest that the change of use of the existing building together with the

minor external alterations would affect protected and priority species and their habitats or give rise to contamination issues.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

B Pattison

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: PL-01 Location Plan; PL-02 Block Plan, PL-07 Proposed Plans and PL-08 Proposed Elevations.
- 3) The materials used in the construction of the development hereby approved shall be as set out within the application form/plans hereby approved.
- 4) The annex shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwelling known as Goat Lodge Farm, Goat Lodge Road, Great Totham. For the avoidance of doubt, the building shall not be let, rented, managed or sold independently to the main dwelling.

END OF SCHEDULE