The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 April 2012

by Brendan Lyons BArch MA MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 30 April 2012

Appeal Ref: APP/H1033/D/12/2172243
Sylvandale Farm, Woodseats Lane, Charlesworth, Glossop SK13 5DS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr Nigel Hackney against the decision of High Peak Borough Council.
- The application Ref HPK/2011/0686 was refused by notice dated 26 January 2012.
- The development proposed is described as a 'pitch roof to replace flat roof area on existing house, including extending gable walls to new roof line'.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a pitch roof to replace flat roof area on existing house, including extending gable walls to new roof line, at Sylvandale Farm, Woodseats Lane, Charlesworth, Glossop SK13 5DS, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref HPK/2011/0686 dated 2 December 2011, 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 the following approved plans: Nos.11.12/1 and 11.12/2.

    3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural matters

2. Since the appeal was submitted, national policy guidance has been updated by the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the cancellation of relevant former guidance, including Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: *Green Belts* (PPG2), which is referred to in the Council's first reason for refusal of the application. Time was allowed for the parties to make submissions on the implications of these changes, but none was received. The appeal decision is based on the up-to-date policy position.

3. Time was allowed for the appellant to make a submission in response to perceived inaccuracies in the Council's 'Delegated Decision Report', the content of which has been noted.

Main issues

4. The main issues in the appeal are:
   - whether the proposal would constitute inappropriate development, by definition harmful to the Green Belt;
   - the proposal's effect on the openness of the Green Belt; and
   - the proposal's effect on the character and appearance of the building and of the surrounding Green Belt and Special Landscape Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal relates to a substantial house that stands in a rural Green Belt location. It appears that the dwelling, which was a traditional two-storey farmhouse with a gabled roof, has been extended to each side in the same gabled form and across the full width of the rear with a flat-roofed two-storey element. Permission is now sought to extend the span of the pitched roof to cover the flat-roofed area, at the same building up the gable ends to the new higher ridge height.

6. National policy set out in the NPPF explains that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence. It states a general presumption against inappropriate development unless very special circumstances exist. The tight control of new building in the Green Belt is echoed by saved Policy OC2 of the High Peak Local Plan (LP).

7. The NPPF states that the extension or alteration of a building will not be inappropriate, provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. 'Original building' is defined as the building as it existed on 1 July 1948.

8. In this case, the Council accepts that much of the extension to the dwelling may predate 1948 and hence form part of the 'original building'. The number of more recent extensions to the house is the subject of some dispute between the parties to the appeal. However, the critical factor in the present proposal is that no additional floorspace would be added. Whilst the ridge of the roof would rise by some 1.1m, the increase in volume would not be significant. The Council's assessment that the proposal would, in effect, add an additional storey, would not be borne out.

9. The cumulative effect of additions to the altered dwelling would be no more disproportionate than the existing. Indeed, the simpler, more traditional form of the full span roof would be much more in proportion with the extended dimensions of the building than the existing arrangement of roofs.

10. For these reasons, I consider that the proposed development would not be inappropriate, and that the need for very special circumstances to support its approval therefore does not arise.

11. The previous extensions to the house have established its impact on the openness of the Green Belt. The additional bulk of the roof owing to the higher ridge would cause a further slight reduction in openness, but not to any significantly harmful degree.

12. The house currently has a rather hybrid appearance, owing to the awkward conjunction of the flat roofed element with the gabled front range and to the non-traditional scale of the first floor front end windows. The proposed roof

would represent a considerable improvement in the appearance of the house, by simplifying its form. The use of matching stone slate for the roof, uninterrupted by rooflights, and matching stone for the gable walls, would help to re-instate a more traditional appearance. Examples submitted by the appellant of traditional buildings nearby, and others to be seen in the local area, confirm that the proposed roof span would not be out of keeping with its setting. There would be no harmful effect on the appearance of the Green Belt or of the Special Landscape Area.

13. For these reasons, I consider that the particular circumstances of the existing dwelling suggest that the proposal would comply with national policy guidance and with LP Policy OC2, which seeks to resist inappropriate development in the Green Belt and with Policies GD4 and OC3, which seek respectively to ensure that development will be appropriate to the character of its surrounding area, and of the Special Landscape Area.

14. As suggested by the Council, a planning condition is required to secure the use of matching materials. The only other conditions needed are the standard conditions on commencement time and confirmation of the approved plans.

15. Having taken account of all representations made, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted subject to these conditions.

Brendan Lyons

INSPECTOR