The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 December 2012

by William Fieldhouse BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 19 December 2012

Appeal Ref: APP/H1033/D/12/2185921
Lees Hall Barn, Lees Hall Farm, off Turnlee Road, Glossop, Derbyshire, SK13 6JT

- 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 James Drakeford against the decision of High Peak Borough Council.
- The application Ref HPK/2012/0322 was refused by notice dated 26 July 2012.
- The development proposed is a rear, single-storey conservatory to existing dwelling.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a rear, single-storey conservatory to existing dwelling at Lees Hall Barn, Lees Hall Farm, off Turnlee Road, Glossop, Derbyshire, SK13 6JT in accordance with the terms of the application Ref HPK/2012/0322 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 plan: 2012/04/01 Rev June 1st 2012.

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

Main Issues

2. The appeal site is within the North West Derbyshire Green Belt and therefore the main issues are:

    - whether the proposal represents inappropriate development for the purposes of national and development plan policy relating to Green Belts; and

    - the effect on the openness, character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is one of three dwellings that were formed following the conversion of an historic, stone, U-shaped agricultural building located in the open countryside outside Glossop.

Whether the Proposal is Inappropriate in the Green Belt

4. The proposed single-storey extension would have a floor area of about 21m^2, which is around 10% of the floor area of the existing dwelling. To my mind, an extension of such a scale would not represent a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building[1], and would be in line with policy OC2 of the High Peak Local Plan (2005) which allows for the limited extension and alteration of existing dwellings in the Green Belt. Accordingly, I conclude on this issue that the proposal would not represent inappropriate development for the purposes of national and development plan policy relating to Green Belts.

The Effect on the Openness, Character and Appearance of the Area

5. The Council claims that part of the extension would be located outside the area originally approved as domestic curtilage when planning permission was granted for the barn conversion in 1999. However, I have been provided with no plans indicating the extent of the approved domestic curtilage, and there was no physical sign of any boundary close to the existing building at the time of my site inspection. The extension would project only 3.5 metres from the rear elevation. It would take a small part of a car parking area that is surfaced with stone chippings adjoining a piece of land that is largely enclosed by stone walls and visually separate from the agricultural land beyond. Given its limited scale, its siting in relation to the existing building, and the nature of the land on which it would be located, I consider that the proposed extension would have an extremely limited effect on the openness of the area, would not materially encroach into the open countryside, or lead to increased pressure to change agricultural land to domestic use.

6. The rear elevation of the converted barns has not been extended, and its original simple form remains largely intact. However, the appearance of the building as a whole, and its surroundings, has been altered through the conversion, and it is clearly now domestic in use. The proposed extension would not be readily visible from any public vantage point or nearby dwellings, and its scale and position, lean-to roof, and materials would all be in keeping with the original building. It is not unusual for traditional dwellings and barns in the area to have extensions of such a form, and I note that the nearby Lees Hall Farm has a single-storey, stone extension with a mono-pitched roof.

7. The size and proportions of the additional windows, including the additional window proposed in the main rear elevation, and double patio doors would not be out of character with the existing openings, and the increased amount of glazing would not, to my mind, significantly detract from the character or appearance of the building.

8. I therefore conclude on this issue that the proposal would not materially harm the openness, character or appearance of the area, and would be consistent with the aims of local plan policies H14, GD4 and OC2 which seek to ensure that extensions to dwellings respect the character of the original building, and its surroundings, in terms of scale, design, layout, fenestration and external appearance, and do not injure the visual amenities of the Green Belt.

[1] National Planning Policy Framework (2012) paragraph 89.

Conditions

9. Whilst the Council has not suggested any conditions additional to the standard two relating to the timing of development and compliance with the approved plans, I consider it necessary to attach a condition to ensure that the materials used on the external surfaces match those of the existing building, in order to safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

William Fieldhouse

INSPECTOR