

Report for Information

Appeal made against the refusal of planning permission

Appeal reference APP/P1805/D/12/2175201
Planning application 11/0987

Proposal 1.5 storey rear extension and alterations

Location 9 Lower Hill Farm, Pound Lane, Frankley

Ward Uffdown

Decision Allowed

The author of this report is Ruth Lambert who can be contacted on extension 1373(e-mail: r.lambert@bromsgrove.gov.uk) for more information.

Discussion

The proposal is for a 1.5 storey rear extension and alterations

The application was determined under delegated powers and refused due to the following reasons as detailed below;

1. The siting, form and design of the proposed extension would detrimentally erode the simple form and utilitarian character and appearance of the original building contrary to Policy C27C of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan 2004 and Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 4.

2. The proposed extension to this re-used rural building would be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt contrary to Policy C27 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan 2004. The proposed extension would therefore constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt contrary to policies D38 and D39 of the Worcestershire County Structure Plan 2001, Policy DS2 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan 2004 and the advice contained in PPG2: Green Belts. No very special circumstances exist or have been put forward by the applicant that would outweigh the proposal's harm to the Green Belt.

The Inspector found the main issues to be:

whether the proposal is inappropriate development for the purposes of Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework); its effect on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in the Green Belt; its effect on the character and appearance of the original building and the surrounding area; and, if it is inappropriate development, whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development.

Discussion

Whether Inappropriate

The appellant has accepted that the appeal building lies within the designated Green Belt. Paragraph 89 of the Framework indicates that one of the exceptions to the construction of new buildings being regarded as inappropriate development in the Green Belt is the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

Bromsgrove District Local Plan 2004 (BDLP) Policy DS2 includes limited extensions to existing dwellings as one of the new developments in the Green Belt that would not be inappropriate. However, the Council has not referred to any guidance on what constitutes a limited extension. I am satisfied that the appellant's stated 24% increase in the floor area, which the Council has not contested, would be a limited extension and would not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. As such, the proposal would not represent inappropriate development for the purposes of Section 9 of the Framework.

Effect on Openness and the purposes of including land in the Green Belt

The proposed extension would increase the scale of built development within the Green Belt, which would have an impact on its openness. However, it would infill a corner of the existing building and its scale would be limited in comparison with that of the dwelling and the whole extent of built development in that area. Therefore, I conclude on this issue that the proposal would not have a significant harmful effect on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

Character and Appearance

The appeal building consists of part of an extensive residential complex that has resulted from the conversion of former agricultural buildings to 9 dwellings and associated garages. It is set on high ground, surrounded by planting within a rural area. The complex, which forms a continual structure that wraps around an inner courtyard area, has retained many of the original features of its former use, including the openings and roofline.

The proposed extension would have a similar height pitched roof to that of the existing building to which it would be attached. It would infill between this garage building and a lower wing to the dwelling. As such, it would be unobtrusive and appear as a natural extension to the original barns. Its roofline would reflect the variation in roof heights throughout the barn conversions.

The large ground floor opening would replace an existing large opening in the single storey wing and, as it would face onto the garden, would not be a prominent feature, being screened by the boundary planting. The size of the openings at first floor level would be similar to those in the other barn conversions and, at my site visit, I observed that the opening in the garage structure would use an existing opening that appeared to me to be bricked up.

Based on the above, and with the use of appropriate and matching materials as detailed, I am satisfied that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the original building and the surrounding area. Furthermore, it would comply with the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 4: *Conversion of Rural Buildings*, which recommends in paragraph 3.3 that the reuse of agricultural buildings should keep additional windows and doors to a minimum and reflect existing patterns, with new windows and door openings preferably located on the inside elevations away from public view.

Very Special Circumstances

As I have found that the proposal would not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt, there is no need for me to consider whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development.

Conclusion

For the reasons given above, the inspector found that the proposal is not inappropriate development and does not have a significant adverse effect on the openness of the Green Belt, the purposes of including land in the Green Belt and the character and appearance of the original building and the surrounding area. As such, it accords with the Framework, Worcestershire County Structure Plan Policies D.38 and D.39 and BDLP Policies C27C, C27 and DS2. Therefore, having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Appeal outcome

The appeal was **Allowed** 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: Drawing Nos GD1062/01, GD1062/02C, GD1062/03 and GD1062/04B.
- 3) No development shall take place until details of the form, colour and finish of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension and alterations hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Costs application

No application for costs was made