
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 July 2018

by **D Guiver LLB (Hons) Solicitor**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 August 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/N2535/W/18/3199961

Land West of Brigg Road, Caistor

- 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 Ms Heather Sugden against the decision of West Lindsey District Council.
 - The application Ref 136656, dated 15 August 2017, was refused by notice dated 27 October 2017.
 - The development proposed is conversion, alteration and extensions to existing barn to create one dwelling with an outbuilding to contain stabling and garage including installation of new access arrangement from Brigg Road.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for conversion, alteration and extensions to existing barn to create one dwelling with an outbuilding to contain stabling and garage including installation of new access arrangement from Brigg Road at Land West of Brigg Road, Caistor in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 136656, dated 15 August 2017, subject to the conditions in the attached Schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. Since the date of the Council's decision, the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 (the Framework) has been published and has effect. Local development plan policies that pre-date the publication should be given due weight according to the degree of consistency with the Framework.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area

Reasons

4. Policy LP55 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2017 (the Local Plan) seeks to limit the conversion of buildings in the countryside for residential use to those having architectural merit that are worthy of retention but can no longer be used for the purposes for which they were built or last used, and which are capable of conversion with minimal alteration. Policy LP55 is consistent with the Framework, which advises at paragraph 127 that policies should ensure developments add to the overall quality of the area and are sympathetic to local character and history. Therefore, the Policy should be given full weight.

5. The appeal site comprises an open field located off Brigg Road in the countryside a mile or so from the centre of the market town of Caistor. The surrounding area is principally agricultural land, although there are a few houses nearby as well as some commercial premises and a large touring-caravan site.
6. The field contains a derelict red-brick barn that appears to have been developed and extended on an *ad hoc* basis over a number of years. The building has a principally 'L-shaped' footprint comprising a main section with a split level dual-pitched roof (the main building) and a seven-metre or so later extension creating a side wing (the wing). There is an additional flat-roofed extension running parallel to the wing creating a small open courtyard and further small extension to the gable at the opposite end of the main building from the wing (the minor extensions). There is evidence of the site having historically contained a number of additional buildings but these are now largely demolished. The building is an interesting example of a brick-built agricultural building worthy of retention that sits comfortably in the wider landscape. However, in its current state it is unfit for continued use and is likely to further deteriorate.
7. The barn has the benefit of a prior approval for conversion to a dwelling pursuant to Class Q, Part Three of Schedule Two to The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015¹ (the GPDO). The proposal is for the repair and extension of the barn, beyond that permissible under the GPDO, and its conversion into a single dwelling, together with the erection of an 'L-shaped' outbuilding providing garaging and stables, the creation of a large pond and the provision of a hard-surface access. Works would be undertaken to provide a split level to the existing courtyard to take account of the site's topography, and this would be mirrored to the rear of the building.

Conversion and Alterations Works

8. The works to the main building would comprise repairs to the split-level roof, the addition of a chimney serving an internal heat source, partial reinstatement of an arched window in one gable and the complete or partial use of the existing and bricked-up doors in the rear elevation to provide two new doors. The two doors in the courtyard elevation of the main building would be used wholly or in part to provide two new doors to the proposed split level courtyard.
9. The wing would be widened by approximately two metres by rebuilding the flank wall facing the courtyard and the existing mono-pitch would be replaced with a dual-pitch that would raise the height of the roof by half a metre or so. Two doors in the wing's rear elevation would be used wholly or in part to provide a new door and a kitchen window. A second kitchen window would be added together with a high-level window providing natural light to a utility room. The three openings in the courtyard elevation would be removed with the rebuilding of the wall and a single door and high-level window would be added to the new elevation with further door for the utility room added in the extended width of the gable end.
10. The minor extensions would be demolished and replaced by a new extension whose footprint would be of similar size to the widened wing on the opposite

¹ Application Ref 133604

side of the courtyard. A dual-pitched roof would be added to this extension. The existing openings in the minor extensions would be removed and the replacement extension would provide a bathroom window five additional windows serving bedrooms.

11. The dual-pitched roofs added to both side extensions and to the extension to the main building would all be lower than both elements of the latter's existing split-level roof. The extensions added together would add approximately 20 percent to the overall floor space of the building. The Courtyard would be slightly narrower than at present but would provide an important private amenity space away from the more open views across the site from the nearby highway. The 13 or so existing door and window openings in the building would be replaced by approximately 18 new door and window openings. Of these, nine would be located in new walls and seven would wholly or partially use existing openings and the remaining two would be added to existing walls. Six openings would be removed following the demolition of some existing walls.

Other works

12. The outbuilding providing stables and garaging would be located in a corner of the site close to the existing building and on the probable site of an earlier, now demolished structure. The limited height of the proposed outbuilding would be clearly subordinate to the main building and given the evidence of a building previously on the site would amount to redevelopment and would not result in any significant impact to the surrounding countryside. The proposed pond is unlikely to cause any significant adverse visual impacts, and could provide some biodiversity benefits to the proposal, it is therefore considered to be acceptable. There are two existing access points into the field, one of which has a dropped kerb that would be utilised as the site entrance. The road adjacent to the access point is straight with good visibility for some distance and the proposed site layout would provide ample turning space for vehicles to enter and leave in forward gear. The location of the access is therefore acceptable. I note that the Council reached a similar conclusion on these matters.
13. Although the appellant describes the proposal as 'wholesale redevelopment of the existing structure' I consider this to mean that works would be required to all elements of the building, including repair as well as extension, and not to be an indication that the buildings would be completely replaced. The proposal represents an opportunity to salvage an architecturally interesting building that would otherwise likely be lost after falling into significant disrepair. The proposed additions would largely replace the most dilapidated, and most recent, additions to the main building while retaining the central core. The proposed additional windows appear to be sympathetic to the overall building and are not excessive or detrimental to the barn's appearance. The works required would be no more than necessary to create a modern single-storey two-bedroom property while retaining the overall shape and character of the building. Therefore, the proposal would accord with Policy LP55 of the Local Plan.

Conditions

14. The conditions set out in the accompanying schedule are based on those suggested by the Council. Where necessary I have amended the wording of

these in the interests of precision and clarity in order to comply with the advice in the Planning Practice Guidance.

15. In the interests of proper planning I have imposed the standard condition in respect of time limits. For certainty I have imposed a condition requiring compliance with the plans. To ensure the site is adequately drained without risk of contamination I have imposed a condition for the approval of foul and surface water drainage to be given before development occurs. Given the historical nature of the site I have imposed conditions requiring a scheme of archaeological investigation and reporting.

Other Matters

16. There is a statement in the evidence before me that the Council considered that the proposal would result in a two-storey building because of the proposed extension sitting adjacent to the higher element of the split-level courtyard. However, the split level merely reflects the topography of the appeal site and the extension would be a single-storey construction and would retain the single level character of the building as a whole.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above, and taking account of all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

D Guiver

INSPECTOR

Schedule

- 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: 2017-19/P01 Rev B; and 2017-19/S01 Rev B.
- 3) Development shall not commence until drainage works for foul and surface water disposal shall have been carried out in accordance with details which shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.
- 4) No demolition or development shall take place until a Written Scheme of Archaeological Investigation shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority in accordance with the Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance of the existing buildings on the site and:
 - i) the programme and methodology of site investigation and recording;
 - ii) the programme for post investigation assessment;
 - iii) the provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording;
 - iv) the provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
 - v) the provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
 - vi) the nomination of a competent person or persons/organization to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.
- 5) No demolition or development shall take place other than in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition 4.