

REPORT TO THE AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	08 October 2014
Application Number	14/06226/FUL & 14/06422/LBC
Site Address	Green Barn, Nettleton, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN14 7NT
Proposal	Single Storey Extension & Associated Alterations. Resubmission Of 14/02938/FUL and 14/03163/LBC
Applicant	Mr & Mrs G Cheetham
Town/Parish Council	NETTLETON
Division	BY BROOK- Cllr Jane Scott OBE
Grid Ref	381712 178557
Type of application	Full Planning
Case Officer	Chris Marsh

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

The applications have been called into Committee by the Local Member, in order to consider the impact of the proposals on the character and setting of the listed building.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the above application and to recommend that planning permission and listed building consent are REFUSED.

2. Main Issues

The main issues in considering the application are:

- Principle of development
- Impact on the character and appearance of the listed building
- Impact on the character and appearance of the area
- Impact on the privacy and amenity of existing neighbours and potential occupants

3. Site Description

The application relates to the property known as Green Barn, a substantial converted barn located on the western edge of the loose pattern of development that forms the village of Nettleton. The building is Grade II-listed and to date has remained in general a faithful representation of its agricultural past, with its porch and cart opening retained through full-height glazing, arrow slit windows and partial full-height internal scale.

The external materials are predominantly of rubble stone, stone roof tiles and timber doors, as is typical of this area. To the southwest of the building is a substantial gravel driveway shared by the neighbouring properties, Green Farm and 'The Tynings', leading to further parking/turning space and a substantial detached garage to the rear. The outbuilding is finished in traditional materials and is, again, substantial; comprising three garage bays and ancillary space above.

A modest but useable garden laid to grass occupies the intervening space between the two buildings, also extending behind the garage and featuring a patio adjacent to the property, and is

bounded to the North by a high-quality traditional stone wall, which has a small opening to allow access on foot to the land adjacent. Although upon visiting the site this land had been mown to a domestic level and enclosed by a post-and-rail fence, this does not form part of the residential curtilage.

The site is located within the open countryside and the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In early 2014, planning permission and listed building consent were refused by Committee in respect of a substantial rear extension to the dwelling, linking to the garage building along the northern site boundary (13/03728/FUL & 13/4105/LBC refer). Subsequent full planning and listed building consent applications in respect of a scheme absolutely identical to that proposed at this time were refused under delegated powers (14/02938/FUL & 14/03163/LBC refer).

4. Relevant Planning History		
Application Number	Proposal	Decision
14/02938/FUL	Single Storey Extension and Associated Alterations (Resubmission of 13/01392/FUL)	Refused
14/03163/LBC	Single Storey Extension and Associated Alterations (Resubmission of 13/01393/LBC)	Refused
13/03728/FUL	Single Storey Extension & Associated Alterations (Resubmission of 13/01392/FUL)	Refused
13/04105/LBC	Single Storey Extension & Associated Alterations (Resubmission of 13/01393/LBC)	Refused
13/01392/FUL	Proposed Single-Storey Extension & Associated Alterations	Withdrawn
13/01393/LBC	Proposed Single-Storey Extension & Associated Alterations	Withdrawn
07/02302/S73A	Alteration to Previous Approval 04.01621.FUL. To Include External Staircase with Gable Access to Roof Space (Retrospective)	Approve
07/02301/LBC	Alteration to Previous Approval 04.01942.LBC. To Include External Staircase with Gable Access to Roof Space (Retrospective)	Approve
04/01621/FUL	CONVERSION OF COW BYRE TO PROVIDE DOUBLE GARAGE AND STORE; ALTERATIONS TO SITE ACCESS	Approve
04/01942/LBC	ALTERATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH CONVERSION TO GARAGE/STORE INCLUDING ALTERATIONS TO ROOF HEIGHT AND PITCH	Approve
03/03193/LBDC	DETAILS PURSUANT TO CONDITION 2 (1-11) OF 03.00464.LBC	Approve
03/00465/COU	AMENDMENT TO 00.00103.FUL - CONVERSION OF BARN TO DWELLING, WORKS TO OUTBUILDING A - REMOVAL OF MODERN FARM BUILDINGS	Approve
03/00464/LBC	AMENDMENT TO 00.00104.LBC - CONVERSION OF BARN TO DWELLING, INTERNAL/EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS	Approve
00/00103/FUL	CONVERSION OF BARN TO DWELLING & GARAGE AND ERECTION OF NEW DWELLING & ALTERATION TO ACCESS	Approve
00/00104/LBC	CONVERSION OF BARN TO DWELLING & GARAGE, INCORPORATING INTERNAL & EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS AND DEMOLITION OF OUTBUILDING	Approve

5. Proposal

An identical resubmission of a scheme already refused in the last few months, planning permission and listed building consent are again sought in respect of the same reduced scheme, most apparently differing from its predecessor in the omission of any kind of direct physical link to the garage outbuilding.

The proposed extension is to be attached to the northeast corner of the dwelling as before, using a modest flat-roofed 'link' element to connect the rear porch to a substantial new family room. The former is to measure 3.6 x 5.2m in footprint, so as to form something akin to a large porch or anteroom, whilst the new family room is to extend a further 8.8m East, toward the outbuilding. Due to its width of 5.2m, this element is to require the removal of the corresponding section of stone wall, which its northern edge is to replace altogether.

Access to the adjacent field is to be relocated to a gateway alongside the annex building, which is shown as gaining two rooflights on its northern plane and a new window to serve a 'utility' at ground floor level. Full-height glazing is to run the length of both of the main sides of the linear extension, with a glazed sliding door opening from the 'link' section onto the patio.

The main section is to feature a pitched roof finished in natural slate, lending a scale of 4.4m to ridge and 2.2m to eaves, incorporating two rooflights per side, a large steel flue and with a fixed light at each end immediately below the apex.

Additionally, it is proposed to insert a timber casement window, complete with stone surround, into the North elevation at ground floor level, presumably to mitigate the light lost due to the new extension.

Furthermore, it is proposed to add onto the southern elevation of the rear porch a further partially-glazed lean-to porch, extending around 1.2m and inset from the East build line, to provide a modest entrance lobby. Its materials are to match the finishes already in evidence at the adjoining barn.

6. Consultations

Nettleton Parish Council – support, for the following reasons:

“a) The scale, form and design of the proposed extension maintains the character of this listed building and its setting in relation to adjacent listed building comprising the former farmstead known as Green Farm.

b) Green Barn, together with the original farmhouse, as now extended, and new dwellings erected in and adjacent to the farmstead has changed both the appearance and character of Green Farm from 'agriculture' to 'residential' and the current proposal secures an appropriate and justified improvement to that current residential use without harm to neighbouring buildings and the countryside beyond.”

Conservation Officer – objects, citing much the same reasons as upheld in refusing the previous applications

7. Publicity

The application was advertised by site notice and neighbour consultation.

Six letters of support received

Summary of key relevant points raised:

- Aesthetic impact either undetectable or beneficial

Other comments have suggested the scheme will enable the family to expand or live more comfortably. However none appear to suggest that the building is uninhabitable in its current state, nor would it reasonably seem to be. Likewise, the circumstances of the occupiers are not claimed or believed to be so unique as to warrant exceptional treatment.

As such, little material weight can be ascribed to this additional point and the proposal should be considered on its own merits.

8. Planning Considerations

Principle of development

As a matter of principle, sympathetic extensions and alterations to listed buildings that serve to conserve or enhance their character are supported by planning policy. One is mindful, however, of the previous planning history of this site, which includes refusals of both a similar scheme and one that is entirely identical to that now proposed. It is considered that there has been no material change in circumstances that should warrant any variation to the approach taken in considering the proposal, nor has any such change been indicated. The Officer's conclusions are therefore as before, as it would be reasonably expected that the Council should be consistent in its approach. It is considered that the proposal as a whole is unacceptable for much the same reasons as on the previous two occasions, as discussed below.

Impact on the character and appearance of the listed building

Whilst the 'in principle' objection to the physical connection between the listed building and demonstrably modern outbuilding has been addressed, the proposed extension remains an overly large and entirely unsympathetic addition to what is otherwise a respectfully-converted building. Such is the residual size of the extension, particularly in terms of its occupation of the northern site boundary, that the effect of visual coalescence with the existing outbuilding is similarly apparent to a significant degree when viewed from the highway to the northwest.

This approach also requires the removal of a substantial section of high-quality stone wall that currently defines the historic boundary of the farmyard. Together with the proposed additional ground floor window, the prevalence of full-height glazing to the northern elevation of the family room fundamentally alters the orientation of the building from a strong East-West axis provided by the historic porches to an altogether more domestic feel that will also intrude into the agricultural land to the immediate north. For unknown reasons, this land has been included in the red line plan, but to the knowledge of the Council does not form part of the residential curtilage.

Although the design intent of the 'link' element is acknowledged, this attempt to keep some degree of separation between barn and family room merely result in the inclusion of a substantial space – around 19m² - that will become primarily an inefficient thoroughfare. Moreover, therefore, this will exacerbate the disproportionate bulk of which the new additions are to comprise. From all elevational viewpoints, the extensions along the northern yard boundary will appear unduly large and fundamentally at odds with the simple aesthetic of the listed barn, which currently represents a high-quality conversion.

Turning to the additional porch, this is considered to be wholly inappropriate and will greatly compromise the comprehension of the simplistic form of the original barn. It is clearly domestic in scale and, despite its functional value, will be harmful to the character and appearance of the listed building by reason of its alien scale.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area

The extended site, situated within the Cotswolds AONB, currently maintains many of the characteristics of its former use despite its gradual conversion to residential units, and still maintains its legibility as an historic working farmyard. The conversion of the cattle byre to the East, as well as a recent permission to convert the nearby store to the north of the dwelling known as Green Farm itself, serve to conserve the historic layout despite changes to the character of the buildings themselves. Even the paddock to the north of Green Barn, which appears to be used in conjunction with the dwelling, maintains a character through its size, shape and post-and-rail fencing that is not atypical of its historic setting. The stone boundary wall is of course an important feature in this respect.

With this in mind, it is difficult to see how the proposed extensions and alterations would not compromise the remaining coherence of the site as an historic farm complex; their immediate impact on the heritage asset and its curtilage translating clearly into a wider impression for those viewing the site from public viewpoints. This loss of character, it is considered, impacts negatively on the character of the immediate local area, and rather sells short the public value of the existing building.

Impact on the privacy and amenity of existing neighbours and potential occupants

Due to the orientation of the extensions and alterations toward open agricultural land to the North, and relative enclosure of the property's garden area, it is not considered that the proposals are likely to have any significant impact on residential amenity by way of overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing.

It should, however, be brought to the attention of Members that the substantial footprint of the extension would severely compromise the amount of useable outside amenity space available for domestic use, all but sterilising the current area of lawn that extends eastwards and behind the detached garage. This, it is considered, would be detrimental to the enjoyment of the property itself, particularly if occupied by a family with young children requiring a suitable, safe outside area in which to play, and out of keeping with the type of plot usually found in the locality.

Conclusions

As set out above, it is considered that the proposals fail to conserve or enhance the character, appearance or setting of the listed building, and will adversely affect its wider context. It is not considered that the extensions or alterations provide any wider benefit, or that the existing accommodation is constrained to the point of being uninhabitable for a modern family. Moreover, the scheme represents a critically disproportionate increase in bulk and massing that will materially harm the character and appearance of the listed building and its setting. As such, the proposal is unacceptable in planning and listed building terms.

9. Recommendation

Planning Permission be REFUSED for the following reason:

- 1 The proposed development, by reason of its siting, scale, massing, design and materials, will adversely affect the character and appearance of the listed building and its setting. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies C3, HE4 and H8 of the adopted North Wiltshire Local Plan and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Listed Building be REFUSED for the following reason:

- 1 The proposed works, by reason of their siting, scale, massing, design and materials, fail to conserve or enhance the listed building or its setting, and are not otherwise justified by any wider benefit. The proposal is therefore contrary to Paragraphs 16(2) and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Appendices: None

Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report: None

Green Barn, Nettleton, Chippenham, Wiltshire. SN14 7NT



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