

Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 13 August 2024

by H Smith BSc (Hons) MSc MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3rd October 2024

Appeal A Ref: APP/T2350/W/24/3343757

Halsteads Farm, Rimington Lane, Rimington, Lancashire BB7 4EA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Hargrove against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 3/2023/1050.
 - The development proposed is alterations and extension to existing dwelling.
-

Appeal B Ref: APP/T2350/Y/24/3343756

Halsteads Farm, Rimington Lane, Rimington, Lancashire BB7 4EA

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Hargrove against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 3/2023/1049.
 - The works proposed are alterations and extension to existing dwelling.
-

Decisions

1. Appeal A is dismissed.
2. Appeal B is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. As the proposal relates to a listed building, I have had special regard to sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).
4. The two appeals concern the same scheme under different, complementary legislation. I have dealt with both appeals together in my reasoning.
5. The proposal would include a reconfiguration to the appeal property's existing patio area to accommodate new hardstanding areas, paths, steps, walling and soft landscaping. There would also be a replacement of 3 standard roof lights with conservation style roof lights within the front and rear roof slopes of the converted barn component of the building. The proposed development and works would include alterations to the existing door/window arrangement of

the entrance hall of the converted barn component. There would also be alterations to the interior of the building, including the reinstatement of a hallway within the farmhouse and removal of a modern floor above the lounge within the barn. The Council found these aspects of the proposed development and works to be acceptable.

6. In this regard I find that these elements of the proposal would preserve the listed building, its setting, and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses and would not harm its significance. Therefore, the focus of these appeals is on the proposed construction of a single-storey side extension to the south-western gable end of the listed building. I have dealt with the appeals on that basis.

Main Issue

7. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve a Grade II listed building, or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Reasons

Special interest and significance

8. The appeal site is located at Halsteads Farm, accessed off Rimington Lane. Halsteads Farm comprises a Grade II listed¹ former farmhouse. Attached to the farmhouse is a barn that has been converted into residential use. The barn is treated as part of the listed building by virtue of section 1(5)(a) of the Act. The farmhouse and barn form one dwelling. They are finished in a mix of coursed and random natural stone with dressed stone detailing and stone/slate roofs.
9. The former farmhouse and attached barn have a linear arrangement and its north-west elevation is positioned close to and fronting the road. Its south-eastern elevation is the building's principal elevation, with traditional stonework, stone mullioned window features, and a historic plaque with date inscription. The two-storey former farmhouse component has a symmetrical façade, with a twin-bay and double-pile plan, gable chimneys and central entry. The attached converted barn, which is lower in height, has a former cart entry door that is now a window feature. This feature indicates the building's historic farming function.
10. Notwithstanding the barn's conversion to residential and the various associated physical alterations, the historic form and agricultural function of the barn is still evident. The relatively modest scale, use of traditional materials, linear footprint, slated gable roof profile, and retention of the former barn's cart entrance feature, all combine to generally respect the agrarian form of this traditional rural building.
11. The listed building's immediate setting comprises a detached garage, garden and courtyard area located within the grounds of the site. The garage is constructed from natural stone with a slate roof. The enclosed garden space is softly landscaped and allows the building to be experienced and appreciated. The building's wider setting is mainly rural, being situated to the northeast of

¹ List Entry Number: 1165321, Halstead Farmhouse – Grade II

Rimington village. There are a small number of existing properties to the northwest and to the southwest of the site.

12. Given the above, I find that the special interest and significance of this heritage asset largely derives from its historic and architectural interests. These are drawn from its illustration of an 18th Century farmhouse and associated historic barn and their value in providing evidence of historic rural lifestyles; the polite style and standard plan form of the farmhouse abutting the unadorned and strong linear form of the barn; as well as the use of traditional materials and methods of construction.
13. In addition, special interest and significance also stem, in part, from the heritage asset's setting. The largely open garden and courtyard area immediately adjacent to the building is the primary space where it is experienced, and its significance appreciated. As such it contributes in a positive way to its heritage merit.

Proposal and effects

14. The proposed single-storey extension would be stepped back from the listed building's north-western elevation and would project forward of the building's principal south-eastern elevation, extending beyond the current structure. Consequently, it would not continue the listed building's linear form. It would also be considerably wider than the farmhouse component of the listed building and would have a similar depth at its deepest point. Although some sections of the proposal would use natural stone, its heavily glazed panels and aluminium framework would appear noticeably contemporary. This prominent and incongruous design would detract from the listed building, appearing awkward and unrelated to its scale and historic design, despite being lower in height.
15. The proposal would create a substantially large modern structure with an inverted L-shaped footprint and a flat green roof, positioned close to the listed building. This would overwhelm the listed building and erode its legibility as a modest rural building, contrasting negatively with its historical linear form and gable roof profile. It would detrimentally alter the authenticity of how the asset is experienced and the ability to appreciate its significance, lessening the contribution the building's setting makes to its special interest and significance.
16. The appellant states that the proposed extension would 'touch' the listed building via an adjoining glass link element and the existing window opening to the rendered gable end of the farmhouse would be adapted to form a doorway to the extension. However, insufficient information has been submitted as to what is being proposed in this regard, and therefore a meaningful assessment cannot be made. As such, I cannot be certain that the proposal would not result in the loss of or damage to the listed building's historic fabric.
17. Although the proposed single-storey extension would be partially screened from views from Rimington Lane by vegetation and the existing boundary wall, the proposed extension, including its glazed elements, would be clearly seen from within the appeal site. During my site visit I also observed views of the proposal's south-eastern elevation would be possible from public vantage

points along Stoops Lane. In any event, the presence of screening does not justify unacceptable development and works.

18. I acknowledge that the proposed extension has been designed intentionally to ensure that the extension is not read as a pastiche addition to the property, but clearly differentiates that it would be a modern intervention. Nevertheless, for the reasons given, it would compromise the significance of the listed building.
19. The appellant indicates that the proposed extension would be readily removed (reversible) without causing any physical harm. Nonetheless, it is likely that it would become a fixture of some considerable permanence. It would also cause harm when in situ.
20. The appellant states that glazing and aluminium are often used as materials where more historic traditional buildings are extended, where the design is intended to ensure a clear separation between two elements, whilst ensuring one cohesive well-designed property. However, for this case before me, it would not be appropriate for the reasons given above.
21. Accordingly, the proposal would not preserve the Grade II listed building, or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. In doing so it would harm the significance of this designated heritage asset.

Public Benefits and Balance

22. With reference to paragraphs 207 and 208 of the Framework, in finding harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the magnitude of that harm should be assessed. Given the extent and fairly localised nature of the proposal, I find that the harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset assessed above would be 'less than substantial' but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight. Paragraph 208 of the Framework requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including where appropriate, securing the asset's optimum viable use.
23. In this case, economic benefits would be delivered through the construction phase and the general investment into the property. The provision of additional living accommodation within the extension and the alterations to the property could also be a social benefit in terms of improvement to the local housing stock. Additionally, it is reasonable to conclude that, subject to detail, the reinstatement of a hallway in the farmhouse, removal of the modern floor above the lounge in the barn and the installation of conservation style rooflights, would be of heritage benefit to the asset and its significance. There would also be some environmental benefit accruing from the green roof.
24. Having regard to the objectives in the Framework, these outcomes would constitute benefits that would flow to the public at large and, whilst moderated by the scale of the scheme, carry moderate weight in favour of the appeals.
25. However, it has not been demonstrated that the only way of securing these benefits would be via the appeals proposal. Additionally, no substantive evidence is before me which shows that the property would not be usable or

viable as a dwelling or that its future would be at risk if the appeals were to fail and the development and works as proposed were not implemented. In these respects, the identified harm to the significance of the listed building has not been clearly and convincingly justified.

26. On balance, in giving considerable importance and weight to the harm to the significance of the listed building, I find that this would not be outweighed by the moderate weight I attach to the public benefits arising from the proposal.

27. I conclude that the proposal would not preserve the listed building, or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. It would therefore fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and the provisions within the Framework which seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment. It would also conflict with Key Statement EN5 and Policies DME4 and DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 (adopted 2014). Collectively, these policies, amongst other things, seek to ensure proposals conserve and where possible enhance heritage assets and their settings, and positively contribute to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place.

Other Matters

28. The proposal would not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on any neighbouring amenities and would not require the removal of any trees. Nevertheless, these are a neutral consideration and do not weigh in favour of the proposal.

29. The appellant indicates that the scheme is a re-design following pre-application consultation with Ribble Valley Borough Council. However, this is not a matter for my consideration in the context of these appeal decisions.

30. The appellant also makes reference to the Council having not consulted with a qualified heritage officer and states that greater weight should be given to the appellant's heritage statement, dated December 2023, than the views of the planning officer. I have taken the appellant's heritage statement into consideration, but it has not altered my decisions. I have determined these appeals on their own merits based on the evidence before me and my observations on site.

Conclusion

31. Appeal A: The proposed development would conflict with the development plan when taken as a whole. There are no material considerations which indicate that the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that Appeal A should be dismissed.

32. Appeal B: For the reasons given, I conclude that Appeal B should be dismissed.

H Smith

INSPECTOR