



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 January 2016

by **Caroline Mulloy BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

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

Decision date: 03 February 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/H0738/W/15/3135061

Beckside Livery, Thorpe Leazes, Cleveland TS21 3HZ

- 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 Charlie Teasdale against the decision of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 15/1836/REV, dated 22 July 2015, was refused by notice dated 16 September 2015.
 - The development proposed is a revised application for part retrospective application for erection of single storey stable block.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. I have used the address on the appeal form which I consider to be more accurate. In addition, I have utilised the description on the decision notice which is a more accurate reflection of the proposal.
3. The application is retrospective in part and I have considered the appeal on that basis. Planning permission was granted for the erection of two stable blocks in 1991 (Council reference 90/2405/P). The stables were constructed of breeze block and were separated by a four metre gap. The stables erected under that planning application were subsequently replaced with a single storey stable block, utilising the existing walls of the previously approved stables and the approximately 4m wide gap was in-filled to make a single building. The walls have been raised in height and double skinned.
4. A retrospective application for this replacement building was refused and enforcement action authorised to return the building back to its lawful form approved under the terms of application 90/2405/P. The current proposal seeks permission for the erection of a stable block with the same footprint as is currently built, but which seeks to alter the roof to create the appearance of two buildings linked by a flat roof.

Main Issue

5. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. The site is situated at the end of a private access road which serves a collection of buildings at Thorpe Leazes. The site is bound by hedgerow to the east and fences
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to the north and south. It is surrounded by agricultural land on all sides. To the west is a cattle shed which was the subject of a separate application. The A177 Durham Road lies a short distance to the east. The surrounding area is gently undulating agricultural land defined by large fields bound by hedgerows.

7. I acknowledge that the proposal would be an improvement on the previous application as the height of the roof would be reduced and the expansive nature of the existing roof would be interrupted by the introduction of a flat roof between the northern and southern aspects of the building in order to mimic the appearance of the previously approved two stable blocks. The use of more traditional materials such as timber cladding would also soften the appearance of the building.
8. However, the proposed building would be of a greater scale and mass than the previously approved scheme. The window and door openings would be larger than would be expected for a stable block which would normally have half opening doors and smaller windows. The windows are also proposed to be double glazed. The overall effect would, therefore, be of a building which is domestic in appearance situated in an agricultural setting.
9. Whilst there is some natural screening to the site, this is largely confined to a hedgerow on the eastern boundary and, due to the height of the building; it would still be visible from the main A177 Durham Road. The proposed building would have a greater scale and prominence than the previously approved scheme and would introduce a building of a domestic appearance into the open countryside. This would fundamentally alter the agricultural nature of the site when viewed from the A177 Durham Road and elsewhere. I, therefore, consider that the proposal would cause material harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside.
10. The appellant points out that he has tidied up a run down and partially derelict site since he bought it. However, the objective of tidying up the site could be achieved by other means and this does not justify the harm which I have identified.
11. The proposed stable is intended for private use and would not, therefore, contribute to the diversification of the rural economy. I, therefore, consider that the benefits of the proposal in terms of providing stables for the personal use of the appellant would not outweigh the significant harm to the character and appearance of the countryside.
12. I, therefore, conclude that the proposal would cause material harm to the character and appearance of the countryside and is, therefore, contrary to Policies CS3 and CS10 of the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010) which together seek to ensure that new development integrates with the protection and enhancement of the landscape and makes a positive contribution to the local area. The proposal also conflicts with saved Policy EN13 of the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan (1997) which seeks to protect the character of the countryside beyond the limits to development.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons stated above, I dismiss the appeal.

Caroline Mulloy

INSPECTOR