
APP/2008/6554

WARD Clatterbridge

Location: Willow Farm Thornton Common Road Thornton Hough Wirral CH63 0LT

Proposal: Alterations and extension to existing dwelling; demolition and rebuild of adjacent outbuilding for use as ancillary granny accommodation together with the demolition of all surplus outbuildings. Amended Description.

Applicant: Mr I Drew
Orchard House
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Irby
Wirral
CH61 3UD

Agent: Mr A Martinez
Survey & Design Associates
29 Woodchurch Lane
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Development Plan allocation and policies: Green Belt
GB2 - Guidelines for Development in the Green Belt
GB5 - Extension of existing dwellings in the green belt
GB3 - Re-Use of Buildings in the Green Belt
PPG2 - Green Belt

Planning History: 1976/5963 conversions of farm buildings into dwelling house with garage and smallholding Refused, Appeal - Withdrawn.

Representations and consultations received: Representations:

A site notice was displayed. A total of 2 letters of notification have been sent to properties in the area. At the time of writing this report no objections have been received.

The applicant has submitted 3 supporting letters and a petition of support from the local residents.

Consultations:

Director of Regeneration - Housing & Environmental Protection Division: No objection.

Director of Technical Services - Traffic Management Division: No objection.

Natural England: Bat Survey required prior to determination.

Bat and Barn Owl Survey - Steve Harris, Wildlife Management: Due to the time of year the survey was carried out there have been difficulties with the assessment and a reassessment is advised. There is currently no evidence of bat or barn owls being present or using the barn currently.

Directors comments: The application was deferred for a committee site visit.

Councillor Alan Jennings has requested that the application be taken out of delegated powers due to the location within the Green Belt and issues relating to the original footprint of the barn and the reasons for demolition.

PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the alterations and extension to existing dwelling; demolition and rebuild of adjacent outbuilding for use as ancillary granny accommodation together with the demolition of all surplus outbuildings. Members should note that the description of the proposed development was amended after submission to include the demolition of the barn at the site. Previously the applicants intention had been to

retain and convert the barn structure. The application now seeks demolition and rebuild of this structure.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

In principle, the extension of a property in the green belt is acceptable as are extensions up to 50% of the original floorspace. The proposal however also includes the removal and rebuild of an original barn/outbuilding, which falls under extensions as it is not the re-use of the original building.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The property is a vacant farmhouse with a barn to the side located within the Green Belt.

The site is on a large plot that backs onto fields. The property is opposite a rugby club that includes a hard standing area, a clubhouse and playing fields. The plot has a large side garden to the west and currently the buildings have a frontage of 22m, which would be increased to 24m.

The original barn buildings are subordinate to the main dwelling house. The two-storey barn is to be demolished and rebuilt and the single storey outbuilding is to be replaced with a glazed two-storey hallway. Due to the materials proposed it is likely that the impact will be reduced through the use of glazing rather than through a more traditional heavy material such as brick. The proposal also includes the removal of an existing lean-to at the side of the two-storey barn.

POLICY CONTEXT

In terms of GB3, conversion of existing buildings is generally accepted, the buildings should be permanent and substantial construction and capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction. The initial application was for the conversion of the original barn/outbuilding, however since the submission of the application the barn has been demolished, therefore Policy GB3 now no longer applies to this application with regards to the barn as the building must now be considered as an extension to the house and falls under UDP Policy GB5.

In terms of GB5, the extension of existing dwellings in the green belt will be permitted provided that the floorspace of the resultant dwelling is no more than 50% larger than that of the habitable floorspace of the original dwelling and subject also to the enlarged dwelling not having a harmful visual impact on its surroundings.

The proposed extensions equate to an 186% increase in floor area in relation to the original dwelling. Whilst it is accepted that part of the extensions reflect an original barn in terms of scale and area, the barn has been removed and the structure is now an extension to the dwelling. The floorspace increase is unacceptable in terms of the current Green Belt Policy GB5 of the adopted UDP.

APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES

The original dwelling plot consisted of a two-storey farmhouse with attached barns, part of which is single storey and two-storey, these barns to the east of the site have since been demolished.

The extension that replaces the barn is to be used as a kitchen and mezzanine floor, which is ancillary to the main house. Part of this extension is two storeys and the rear lounge is a single storey extension looking out onto the courtyard.

The two-storey side extension to the west has been reduced in scale through amendments to the original application so as to reduce the visual impact onto the original dwelling. The extension has a width of 6m (this has been reduced from the original proposed 9m) and has been designed to reflect the character and design of the original house. However the overall extensions measures over 50% as stated in GB5.

The application also includes a detached outbuilding to be used as a garage

Steve Harris, Wildlife Management, has conducted an independent bat and barn owl survey; he concluded that there was no evidence of bat or barn owl species using the farmhouse or present at the site.

HIGHWAY/TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS

There are no Highway Implications relating to this proposal.

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

There are no Environmental/Sustainability issues relating to these proposals.

CONCLUSION

The proposal is unacceptable due to the increase in floor area, the proposal shows an increase of 86% of the original floor space. The proposal is contrary to the UDP Policy and is unacceptable.

Recommendation: Refuse

Reason(s):

- 1 The proposal results in an unacceptable increase in floor area that exceeds 50% and is therefore unacceptable in terms of Wirral's adopted Unitary Development Plan Policy GB5.

Last Comments By: 28 April 2009

56 Day Expires On: 04 November 2008

Case Officer: Miss A McDougall