

Application:	2017/0213/FUL	ITEM 2	
Proposal:	Retention of Barn conversion & extensions		
Address:	Leighfield Barn, Lambley Lodge Lane, Belton In Rutland, OAKHAM, Rutland, LE15 9JY		
Applicant:	Mr Steve & Mrs Tessa Barson	Parish	Leighfield
Agent:	Mr P J Breslin	Ward	Braunston and Belton
Reason for presenting to Committee:	Parish Objection		
Date of Committee:	16 May 2016		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The conversion of a barn to a dwelling under Class Q has been extended beyond the original envelope of the building resulting in a loss of the Class Q permission. This full application to retain the dwelling as built; including 2 storey and single storey extensions is subject to the full range of planning policies. The location in open countryside is considered to be unsustainable and, following a similar refusal in 2014, together with the poor design of the extensions, is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSAL, for the following reasons:

The proposal is unacceptable due to its isolated location resulting in an unsustainable residential development in open countryside for which there is no special justification. The buildings, as constructed with a bulky 2 storey and single storey extension to the barn and an increase in height and bulk of the outbuilding, together with the use of red pantile roofs, are more prominent in the landscape using an inappropriate material. The proposal would thereby be contrary to the provisions of the NPPF, in particular Para 55, policies CS4 and CS16 of the Rutland Core Strategy (2011) and policies SP6 and SP15 of the Site Allocations and Policies DPD (2014).

Site & Surroundings

1. The site is located on the east side of Lambley Lodge Lane approximately 800 metres north of the edge of Belton village and the Planned Limit to Development.
2. The barn itself is around 180 metres east of the road with access up a slope and over a brow. Public Footpath E242 runs west to east, approximately 380 metres to the south east of the barn. Lambley Lodge Lane comes to a dead end not far beyond the site entrance but continues as a bridleway to join Hollygate Road Ridlington about 550 metres to the north. It is also part of the Macmillan Way.

Proposal

3. The application has been submitted to retain a barn conversion that is nearing completion following a complaint that the works being carried out under the new Class Q 'Permitted Development' rights (Change of use from Agricultural use to Dwellings) had gone beyond what had been approved. Class Q contains restrictions, one of which is that the works for conversion cannot go beyond the

envelope of the original building. In this case a 2 storey extension has been built on one side and a single storey extension has been built to the rear, all without the benefit of planning permission.

4. The submission also includes the separate outbuilding (barn/store) that was approved in 2016 as it has also been built larger than approved. The main part of the barn was 7.06 metres by 6.3 metres but is now 8.1 metres by 6.6 metres and the side store was 4 metres by 3.6 metres but is now 4.9 by 4.5. The ridge heights of those elements have also risen from 5.8 metres and 3.9 metres respectively to 6.65 metres and 4.8 metres.

Details are shown in the Appendix.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Particulars of Development	Decision	Date
F/98/0675/9	Conversion of existing farm buildings to form dwelling with workshop	Refusal	27/01/1999
2014/0711/FUL	Existing redundant farm barn change to residential use and first floor extension.	Refused	09.12.2014
2014/1041/PAD	Conversion of agricultural building to 1 No. dwelling.	Refused	18/12/2014
2015/0334/PAD	Conversion of 1 No. Agricultural Building to 1 No. Dwelling House.	Withdrawn	27/5/2015
2015/0555/PAD	Conversion of barn to residential use.	Approved	10.08.2015
2015/1137/PAD	Change of use of agricultural building to a single dwelling house, with associated operational development.	Approved	03.2.2016
2016/0433/FUL	Implement Barn, Feed and Service Store.	Approved	08/07/2016
2017/0213/FUL	Barn conversion & extensions, implement barn. Revised scheme.		

The reason for refusal for 2014/0711/FUL was as follows:

The proposal would be unacceptable due to its isolated location resulting in an unsustainable residential development in open countryside for which there is no special justification. The proposal would thereby be contrary to the provisions of the NPPF, in particular Para 55, policies CS4 and CS16 of the Rutland Core Strategy (2011) and policy SP6 of the Site Allocations and Policies DPD (2014).

Planning Guidance and Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

Supports sustainable development

Para 55 – To promote sustainable development in rural areas housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Local Planning Authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as;

- the need for a farm or forestry worker to live there,
- where it would represent the optimal use of a heritage asset
- where it would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to enhancement of the immediate locality, or
- be of exceptional quality, truly outstanding or innovative etc.

The Rutland Core Strategy (2011)

CS4 – Location of Development

Development in the Countryside will be strictly limited to that which has an essential need to be located in the countryside and will be restricted to particular types of development to support the rural economy and meet affordable housing needs. The conversion and re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed rural buildings for residential and employment-generating uses in the countryside will be considered adjacent or closely related to the towns, local services centres and smaller services centres provided it is of a scale appropriate to the existing location and consistent with maintaining and enhancing the environment and would contribute to the local distinctiveness of the area.

CS19 – Promoting Good Design

Site Allocations and Policies DPD (2014)

SP6 – Housing in the Countryside

New housing development will not be permitted in the countryside except where:

- a) it can be demonstrated to be essential to the operational needs of agriculture, forestry or an established enterprise requiring a rural worker to live permanently at or near to their place of work in the countryside; or
- b) affordable housing would meet an identified local housing need as set out in Core Strategy Policy CS11 (Affordable housing); (these sites may also include small numbers of market homes where exceptionally permitted by Policy SP10 (Market housing within rural exception sites).

The development itself, or cumulatively with other development, should not adversely affect any nature conservation sites, or the character and landscape of the area, or cultural heritage.

The re-use or adaptation of buildings for residential use will only be permitted in the countryside where:

- a) the vacant building to be converted and re-used is a permanent structure capable of
- b) being converted without major re-construction;
- c) the proposal is accompanied by evidence that a reasonable effort has been made to secure a suitable business or commercial use, or there is evidence that any alternative use is not viable, before residential use is considered; the building relates well to a town, local service centre or smaller service centre or is close to a regular public transport service to such settlements;
- d) the creation of a residential curtilage does not have a detrimental impact on the character of the countryside. Any historical, cultural or architectural contribution the building makes to the character of the area will be taken into account in the overall assessment of the proposal.

Proposals to extend dwellings in the countryside will be permitted where development is within the existing curtilage, only results in a modest increase in the volume of the original dwelling, is in keeping with the character, footprint, size and design of the original dwelling and is not visually intrusive in the landscape.

SP15 – Design & Amenity

Other guidance

The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings – A Guide to Good Practice. Historic England publication (2006)

Consultations

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| 5. | Ecology Unit objection | As this is a retrospective application there is no |
| 6. | Highways | No Objections subject to the following conditions.
SWHI01 Provision and retention of visibility splays.
SWHI04. Turning Areas |
| 7. | Belton in Rutland Parish Council | While there is no denying this build in its original planned stage was very pleasing, the EGM of the councillors was surprised to find that yet again, for the third time in as many months, it is proposed the original plans are to be ignored. The meeting noted the second floor of the barn was not in the original plans. The overall size of the proposed changes will enlarge this already prominent countryside property significantly. While it isn't in the village, it does indeed overlook the village and will be significant in the landscape for all those who come to our village to enjoy the countryside walks which approach and pass it. There have been other, similar applications to enlarge barns in and around the village which have not met favour with RCC Planning and we would ask that the same view is taken for the unnecessary enlargement of this barn |

Neighbour Representations

8. None

Planning Assessment

9. The main issues are policy, design and landscape impact.

Policy

10. The Development Plan, specifically Policies CS4 and SP6, restricts new housing in the countryside to that which is necessary, usually for agriculture or forestry. This is supported by the advice in Paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

11. CS4 states that conversion will only be permitted where the building is close to sustainable settlements and where there is no environmental impact. Policy SP6 builds on the Core Strategy and sets out where residential conversion might be allowed. No evidence has been submitted for other uses and the barn is not well related to the settlement. The building is not considered to be in a sustainable location this far from the village. Belton has a limited range of services and facilities.
12. Policies CS19 and SP15 require that new development is well designed. The 2 storey extension that has been added to the end of this barn creates an unbalance effect and is not designed as a subservient element, consequently adding bulk to the appearance of the building.
13. Planning permission was refused for a conversion of this barn to a dwelling in 2014. This was on the basis of the overall policy and for the reason set out above. The legislation then changed to allow conversion of agricultural buildings to dwellings without a full planning permission but subject to a prior notification procedure, under Class Q of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 2015. A subsequent approval was then given for conversion under the new legislation for 2 schemes, in 2015.
14. Class Q specifically exempts conversions from considerations of a sustainable location.
15. Work commenced on the conversion and Officers' attention was drawn to the fact that the works were not being carried out in accordance with the approved plans. The critical point is that the conversions that can be carried out under Class Q cannot go beyond the original envelope of the building. Once this has been breached the permission under Class Q is lost and a full application is required, upon which all the relevant policies set out above, including Para 55 of the NPPF, apply, including the need for a sustainability test.
16. Members will see from the history that planning permission has already been refused for the conversion of the barn in 2014, which did not include an extension. That decision was not tested on appeal. The policies have not changed since then so there would need to be a clear change in circumstances to come to a different conclusion now. The only change in circumstance is that the new Class Q now exists to provide a fall-back position in some cases. In this case however, that position does not exist as the works have gone beyond Class Q, so leaving the building in an unauthorised state.
17. The approval under Class Q is now lost so there is no fallback position, the applicant cannot go back to build what was allowed under that approval and planning permission is now required for any works to create a dwelling from this building.

Design

18. The works that have been carried out have included large areas of glazing that, whilst being under very limited control under Class Q, are in full control on this application. The convention on converting barns is that the existing openings should be used with little additional openings. These should then be in a random pattern and size to reflect the original character of the barn. There is clear Historic England guidance on this issue. This building is not listed but is a non-designated heritage asset.
19. The fenestration that has been used on parts of the conversion and the extension is domestic in nature and gives the overall appearance of a modern house rather than a converted barn. The windows in the gable end of the extension are unbalanced. The 2 storey extension, with its single storey projection to the rear, adds considerable bulk to what was a simple barn with a single storey wing either side. Its relationship to the barn is poor and looks like a domestic extension.

20. Pantiles have been used on the roof and whilst they are in a single pantile form that has some use in Rutland historically they are concrete and dark red whereas when they are used in Rutland they are clay and an orangey red colour. The approval under Class Q stated that the roof would be 'slate', which would have been the appropriate material in this location and helped the building assimilate into the landscape. The outbuilding was approved using pantiles, but these can be traditional for ancillary agricultural buildings and if that building had been built at the approved height it would not have been as prominent as it now is.
21. A survey of Belton shows that there is no historic use of red pantiles in the village. Roof materials are limited to Collyweston and Welsh slate with limited modern concrete tiles on later properties. Slate would therefore have helped the building assimilate into the landscape much more comfortably, notwithstanding the bulk of the extensions. There is a farmhouse built in the 1980's on College Farm Lane that has red pantiles but this is less prominent in the landscape and is subject to a current application for a replacement dwelling where the roof material can be more appropriate in the future.

Landscape Impact

22. In terms of visual impact, the barn is located well off the public highway so is not particularly prominent from closer views. Beyond the access, along Lambley Lodge Lane the building does become visible, mainly the end of the building opposite to where the 2 storey extension has taken place. From the rising land on the Bridleway it is again relatively prominent. The land to the immediate north of the site rises such that there are no long public views of the site, but it is visible from the Bridleway on rising land to the north west.
23. A public footpath runs to the south east of the site where views of the gable end of the 2 storey extension are most prominent. There is a view of the building in longer distance views from a point on Loddington Lane within the village and in very long views from Loddington Lane about 1 mile out of the village to the north west. As set out above, the prominence is exaggerated by the red tiled roof.