



Planning Services

COMMITTEE REPORT

APPLICATION DETAILS

APPLICATION NO:	6/2010/0429/DM and 6/2010/0430/DM/LB
FULL APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:	Conversion of barn & byre to dwelling, including extension & demolition works, formation of access & erection of garage (part retrospective) West Barn, Mickleton
NAME OF APPLICANT:	Mr G Walton & Mrs Anne Routledge
ADDRESS:	West Barn Mickleton Barnard Castle Co Durham DL12 0LL
ELECTORAL DIVISION:	Barnard Castle West
CASE OFFICER:	Charlie Colling Planning Officer 01833 696206 charlie.colling@durham.gov.uk

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND PROPOSALS

These applications have been brought before members following a request from Councillor Richard Bell, giving the reason 'to allow members a free debate on the materials to be used for the proposal'.

The site consists of a Grade II Listed barn with land adjacent. The site is within the development limits of Mickleton and the Conservation Area. The topography of the site is such that the land slopes gently down towards the north. Access for the site would be taken across an adjacent parcel of land. This adjacent parcel of land is not within the applicant's ownership, although the applicant does benefit from a right of way across the land. To the north of the site there is a working farmyard, with associated buildings, which is not within the applicant's ownership.

Part retrospective planning permission and listed building consent is sought for the

conversion and extension of this existing barn and byre to form a two bedroom dwellinghouse with attached garage and sunroom. The proposed development would require the partial demolition of a single storey attached stone byre and milking parlour, which are not listed.

The applications have been submitted as the majority of the development has been completed; however there are elements of the development which differ from those agreed by the previous approvals. Members should note that this report deals with both the application for part retrospective planning permission and listed building consent.

The original applications for the conversion of this barn were granted with a number of conditions attached. One of these conditions required joinery details of the windows and doors to be agreed and a further condition required the roofing materials to be agreed. The window details were submitted and a sliding sash was agreed. However, the windows which have been installed are top hung mock sliding sash, casement windows. The roof material was discussed but never formally agreed. The applicant has used an artificial stone for the roof of the extensions.

PLANNING HISTORY

6/2008/0303/DM - Conversion of barn & byre to dwelling house, including extension & demolition works, formation of new access & erection of garage (approved)

6/2008/0308/DM/LB - Listed building consent for conversion of barn & byre to dwelling house, including extension & demolition works (approved).

6/2008/0417/DM/CA - Conservation area consent for demolition of part of outbuildings & milking chamber to facilitate development (granted)

6/1989/0045/DM - Erect calf rearing and calving building as extension to barn (approved)

6/1989/0040/DM/LB – Listed building consent for erection of calf rearing and calving building as extension to barn (approved)

PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL POLICY:

- **Planning Policy Statement 1:** Delivering Sustainable Development sets out the Government's overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system.
 - **Planning Policy Statement 3:** Underpins the delivery of the Government's strategic housing policy objectives.
 - **Planning Policy Statement 5:** Sets out the Government's planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment.
 - **Planning Policy Statement 7:** Sets out the Government's planning policies for rural areas, including country towns and villages and the wider, largely undeveloped countryside up to the fringes of larger urban areas.
 - **Planning Policy Statement 9:** Sets out planning policies on protection of biodiversity and geological conservation through the planning system.
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REGIONAL POLICY:

The North East of England Plan - Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (RSS) July 2008, sets out the broad spatial development strategy for the North East region for the period 2004 to 2021. The RSS sets out the region's housing provision and the priorities in economic development, retail growth, transport investment, the environment, minerals and waste treatment and disposal. Some policies have an end date of 2021 but the overall vision, strategy, and general policies will guide development over a longer timescale.

Policy 8 – Protecting and Enhancing the Environment, seeks to maintain and enhance the quality, diversity and local distinctiveness of the environment throughout the North East.

Policy 32 – Historic Environment, seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment.

Members should be aware that the Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP (Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government) wrote to all Local Planning Authorities on 27th May 2010, advising of his intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies. This is a material planning consideration in the determination of any planning application.

– LOCAL PLAN POLICY:

- GD1 General Development Criteria
- H10 Restoration or conversion of buildings to residential use within development limits
- BENV1 Alterations, extensions and changes of use to a Listed Building
- BENV3 Development affecting the character of a Listed Building or its setting.
- BENV4 Development within and/or adjoining a conservation area

The above represents a summary of those policies considered most relevant in the Development Plan the full text, criteria, and justifications of each may be accessed at (www.durham.gov.uk)

CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY RESPONSES

STATUTORY RESPONSES:

Parish Council – As this development is nearing completion, Mickleton Parish Council raises no objection to this application.

Natural England – No objections subject to conditions and informatives.

INTERNAL CONSULTEE RESPONSES:

Design and Conservation Officer –

There the two major issues at question, the roof materials and the windows (as installed not as proposed) cause considerable harm to the significance of the listed building.

Windows

The windows as specified on the approved plans were not at the time of approval considered to be significantly detailed enough to grant approval without conditions. Condition 13 of the approval required details at a scale of 1:20, these were duly submitted and showed in full detail sliding sash windows, the windows installed are in fact top hung mock sash windows, at odds with the submission plan and the discharge of condition information. I do not consider therefore that any fault lies with us on this matter.

A compromise has been proposed in this application showing the windows to the extension retained as they are installed with the removal of the mock side horns. Although not as

previously approved and far from ideal, this aspect is on balance considered to be acceptable.

The windows to the original listed barn would again be altered with the removal of the mock side horns, to give a more simple appearance more in character and appropriate to a barn conversion. This is again a compromise; however in this instance I am willing to accept these alterations.

Roof

The roof is another matter, the fundamental issue here is that the use of artificial materials on extensions to listed buildings is not an approach the current or any of the previous authorities would have condoned. It is fundamental to the basic ethos of honest use of materials and design in historic buildings.

Newly quarried Teesdale slabs are available. An alternative has been suggested to the applicant in the form of natural slate, the key here is the use of the word 'natural'. Natural slate has been used widely locally to replace original materials such as stone flags, especially on secondary elements of historic buildings and has become part of the Teesdale vernacular.

Inappropriate use of 'mock' materials on newly added secondary elements of buildings arguably diminishes the positive discernable impact that the principal front range of the building should have. I therefore recommend that 'natural slate' is an appropriate and reasonable material as a preferred option to use on the now built large rear extension of this listed building.

The materials under dispute now and which have already been used on site are of a composite construction so the cuts around certain roofing elements expose the internal aggregates within them, this highlights their artificial nature and is at odds therefore with the host listed building. Furthermore the artificial slabs are regular in pattern as is the thickness of edge detailing and colour. In other areas they have weathered very poorly with the cement colouring fading. All of these factors are at odds with the special nature of the listed building and other building groups in the surrounding conservation area.

The defining issue in this case is that irrespective of the use of the Bradstone material elsewhere it has not, and should not be approved for use on a listed building. In the absence of an Article 4 Direction in Mickleton it is possible that the other cases referred to did not even require permission. In this case we had control, imposed an appropriate condition to define materials, however the applicant proceeded to install the materials without formally discharging this condition.

To approve artificial poor quality materials in this case will make other similar cases, and there will potentially be many, almost indefensible. This is not a matter of aesthetics, it is a matter of good practice and core principles.

I therefore recommend that this application be refused.

PUBLIC RESPONSES:

Neighbouring properties have been consulted, a site notice posted and an advert placed in the local press with no objections received.

Applicant's Statement

It is difficult to know where to start with this applicant's statement to support this planning application because there are so many issues to take into account. When we first considered

converting this barn to be our home it was still being used to store hay as well as providing shelter to cattle during the winter months. There was an assortment of small outbuildings with a variety of construction materials both for walls and roof. The original barn was listed in June 1986 along with several other properties in the village. The cow byre which had been added in the 50's was excluded from this listing. This byre had an asbestos roof. It is the replacement for this roof that is the main issue of this retrospective planning application. We have been threatened with an enforcement notice if we did not change the roof or apply for retrospective planning. We would like to draw your attention to the covering letter which was sent in with the retrospective planning application for West Barn, as well as the Design and Access Statement that was also included. We feel that all the points that were made in both these documents are particularly relevant to this planning application and will help the Committee to reach an informed decision.

However, we would like to emphasise that after discussion and site visits with the 2 previous conservation officers we understood that we could use Bradstone tiles for the new part of this building. In our naivety we took the word of professional County Council employees and did not realise that we should have followed this up and should have had this in writing, there is no written evidence or minutes of any meetings other than our own diary notes. We carried on and fitted the roof assuming that we had permission to do this. This roof was fitted whilst the second conservation officer was in post and had been in situ for 7 months before the third and current officer visited.

It was then that it was not accepted that agreement had been verbally reached about the materials for the roof. The planning department insisted that we change the roof, they said that to leave the roof as it now is, would set a precedent for a listed building. However, when delving deeper into information to support this retrospective planning application we have discovered that this part of the building is not listed. This was clearly stated in two documents prepared by the planning officers for the original planning application. (Report6/2008/0308/DM/LB and Report6/2008/0417/DM/CA). We also discovered that the precedent has already been set within the village itself for a listed building to have an extension with a Bradstone tile finish to the roof. There are also other buildings within the area with Bradstone roofs. Bradstone is approved for use in conservation areas (a letter confirming this is with the planning application).

In conclusion, we have had tremendous support from the village residents as well as the unanimous support from the parish council for this application. We are hoping to receive the same positive support from the planning committee. Mr Walton has expressed his wish to address the planning committee about this application and will be more than happy to answer any questions.

The above represents a summary of the comments received on this application. The full written text is available for inspection on the application file which can be viewed at (<http://teesdale.planning-register.co.uk/PlanAppDisp.asp?RecNum=19762>)

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

This report deals with both the part retrospective planning permission and listed building consent for this development.

The site consists of a Grade II listed barn situated within the development limits and conservation area of Mickleton. Planning permission and listed building consent were granted in 2008 for the conversion and extension of this building to form a single residential dwelling. A number of conditions were attached to this permission some of which were pre-commencement. Two of these pre-commencement conditions required joinery details of the

windows and doors to be submitted and agreed with the local planning authority and a further condition required details of the roof materials to be agreed with the local planning authority.

The main issues to consider in determining this application are the principle, design, impact on Listed Building, impact on Conservation Area, amenity and protected species.

Principle

The principle of the conversion and extension of this building has been established through the approval of the previous application. The site is within the settlement limits of the village and would accord with the principles of policy H10 of the Teesdale Local Plan.

Design

The application is part retrospective in that the majority of the works have been carried out. The development essentially retains the existing listed barn in its present form. However, a two storey extension has been erected to the rear along with some other single storey extensions to include a garage and sun room. The principal elevation of the building remains unaltered, other than the replacement of the windows, doors and the addition of a rooflight and flue pipe.

The two storey rear extension accommodates an entrance hall, WC and staircase to ground floor, and a bedroom, en-suite and hallway to first floor. The extension has a pitched roof and is set at a slightly lower ridge height to that of the main barn. The walls are constructed in stone, and the roof finished in an artificial stone.

The proposals also include the conversion and part demolition of an existing attached byre and milking chamber. The byre is single storey and of a substantial size. This building is not listed. Part of this byre has been demolished in order to allow for access to the garage. The majority of the byre remains, although a section with a footprint of approximately 3.9m x 7.4m would be removed. The remaining byre has been converted to provide a kitchen/dining room. To the west of this, protruding to the side of the main building there is a single storey sun room extension. This extension has a large amount of glazing to the roof and to the southern (front) elevation. Given the gradient of the site and the position of the sunroom, it is considered that this element would not be so prominent as to adversely affect the listed building or the appearance of the development as a whole within the conservation area in accordance with policies BENV1 and BENV4 of the Teesdale Local Plan.

To the north (rear) of the site a single garage has been erected, which is attached to the two storey rear extension, and a further single storey extension to the east of the building accommodates a covered lobby. The covered lobby again has a largely glazed roof, although this would be difficult to see from ground level, given the sloping nature of the site. The proposals also include the siting of an oil tank on a narrow strip of land to the north of the garage, which would seem a logical position to limit views of this.

The overall extent and form of the proposed extensions are considered to be acceptable with no adverse impact upon the character or setting of this listed building in accordance with Policy BENV1 and BENV3 of the Local Plan. The design and conservation officer at the time of considering the previous application advised that a considerable amount of pre-application discussion had taken place and subject to the finer details being correct the overall extension and conversion was considered to be acceptable.

The form of the proposed scheme would have limited impact upon the appearance of the conservation area, with the main frontage of the building, which has a considerable contribution to the street scene, remaining largely unaltered. The extensions being sited to the rear of the building, and those single storey elements to the side are considered to be appropriate in appearance and would have a reduced visual impact, given the topography of the site.

There is an existing stone wall to the front and rear boundary of the site. The curtilage proposed would appear logical and relative to the scale of the dwelling. This aspect of the proposals is therefore considered acceptable, subject to suitable boundary treatments of dry stone walls.

A satellite dish is indicated on the proposed plans although no details of this have been provided. If members are minded to approve the application then this could be controlled by way of condition.

Impact on Listed Building

The windows which have been installed in the new extension and gables of the listed barn are double glazed timber casement windows, top hung in a mock sliding sash style. There are horns to the sides of these windows. The applicant proposes to retain these windows, but would remove the mock horns as they are considered to be more harmful to the appearance of the windows than the mock style construction themselves.

The main front elevation of the listed barn has been fitted with timber top hung, mock sliding sash windows. This is the principal elevation of the building and is the prominent frontage of this development. The applicant proposes to alter these windows by removing the imitation horns and altering the window mechanism so that the top half of the windows would open inwards.

The windows which have been installed are considered to be a compromise on what would normally be expected for a Grade II listed building. The design and conservation officer is willing to accept the alterations to the windows which have been installed and this element of the proposals subject to these alterations are considered to be acceptable.

The roof to the main Grade II listed barn is finished with a natural Teesdale stone. This was the original covering for this roof and has been retained. The extensions to the rear however have been finished with an artificial stone.

Policy BENV1 of the Teesdale Local Plan advise that:

‘Alterations, extension and changes to a listed building will only be permitted if the proposals are in keeping with the character and appearance of the building.....’

Policy BENV3 of the Teesdale Local Plan advises that:

‘Development which would adversely affect the character of a listed building or its setting will not be permitted.’

It is considered that it is fundamental to the basic ethos of honest use of materials and design in historic buildings, that appropriate materials are used when considering extension

or alterations to listed buildings. These materials are considered to be unacceptable. They have already been used on site and are of a composite construction so the cuts around certain roofing elements expose the internal aggregates within them, this highlights their artificial nature and is at odds therefore with the host listed building. Furthermore the artificial slabs are regular in pattern as is the thickness of edge detailing and colour. In other areas they have weathered very poorly with the cement colouring fading. All of these factors are at odds with the special nature of the listed building and other building groups in the surrounding conservation area. The proposals for these reasons are considered to unacceptable and with a detrimental impact to the character and appearance of the listed building and contrary to both policies BENV1 and BENV3 of the Local Plan.

Planning Policy Statement 5 advises that 'Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Loss affecting any designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification'. In this instance it is considered that the use of an artificial roof covering would cause harm to the setting and character of the listed building and there has been no convincing justification submitted to use this material on extensions to this Grade II listed building.

Policy 32 of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East to 2021 advises that planning proposals should seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment. Through the use of artificial materials for the roof covering it is considered that these proposals fail to meet the aims of this policy, as they would not accord with the fundamental principles of conservation.

Discussions have taken place with the applicant regarding the possibility of replacing this roof with a natural material such as blue slate, however the applicant has chosen not to progress with this suggestion.

The site is within the Mickleton conservation area and it is noted that there are properties within the village which have replaced their roof coverings with non-traditional materials. However, the Local Planning Authority would not have control over these other properties. This development consists of the conversion and substantial extension of a Grade II listed building, situated within the village conservation area. The policies in the local plan are quite specific in their aims, in that they only permit development which is in keeping with the character and appearance of the listed building and would not compromise its special character.

It is considered that this aspect of the development is not a matter of aesthetics but is a matter of good practice and core principles of conservation. The use of an artificial material for an extension to a listed building would set a poor precedent for other developments. The materials are for these reasons considered to be unacceptable and contrary to local, regional and national planning policy.

Amenity

The site is detached from other buildings, there being a distance of approximately 27 metres from the northern boundary of the site to the properties known as Garth Cottages. To the west of the site there are no other buildings within the immediate vicinity. To the east there is a terrace of properties, with the nearest dwelling being 'Rosedene'. In the gable of the main barn which is set 'back', further north from the rear of this property, but does run adjacent, there would only be a single window serving a bathroom. It is therefore considered reasonable to attach a condition requiring that this window be obscurely glazed, in order to

prevent any overlooking of the neighbouring property. There are other windows proposed in the side of the two storey extension which would again face this general direction. However, as the barn is set further north than the adjacent dwelling it is not anticipated that there would be any potential for overlooking from these other windows.

Access

Vehicular access for the site would be taken from the B6277. A new access has been formed in an existing stone boundary wall. The access track would be taken across an area of land which is not within the applicant's ownership. However, the owner of the land has confirmed in writing that they have granted the applicant a vehicular right of way over this land.

A turning area is also proposed to allow vehicles to manoeuvre so that they could enter and exit the site in a forward gear.

The highways officer did not raise any objection to the proposals in the original application for this site and the highways arrangements remain the unchanged. This aspect is therefore considered to be acceptable.

Protected Species

A protected species report has been submitted with the application which concludes that there was no evidence of any species of bat roosting in the building, and there was no evidence of barn owls using the buildings. Three common pipistrelle bats were recorded in the general area of the building. Mitigation measures have been proposed and Natural England have advised that they have no objections to the proposals subject to standard informatives and the works being carried out in accordance with the mitigation detailed in the protected species report which can be controlled by way of condition.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the proposed conversion and extension is considered to be acceptable in principle. However, the materials used for the roof of the extension to this Grade II listed building are inappropriate as they have a detrimental impact upon both the character and appearance of this listed building. The roofing material would set a poor precedent for other developments and is contrary to the ethos of conservation principles when considering extensions to listed buildings. The proposals in this respect are therefore considered to be contrary to local, regional and national planning policy.

RECOMMENDATION

That the applications be REFUSED subject for the following reason:

1. The use of an artificial stone for the roof covering of the extension would have a detrimental impact upon the historic character of the grade II listed building contrary to policies BENV1 and BENV3 of the Local Plan, Planning Policy Statement 5 Policy HE9 and Policy 32 of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the north east to 2021.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Submitted Application Forms and Plans.
- Design and Access Statement
- Teesdale District Local Plan 2002
- Planning Policy Statements / Guidance, PPS1, PPS3, PPS5, PPS7 and PPS9
- Responses from Design and Conservation officer, Natural England and Parish Council.
- Public Consultation Responses



Site Location

