

Statement in support of proposals for extensions to The Laithe, Haigh Lane, Hoylandswaine.

The site and surroundings.

The property lies on the north eastern edge of Hoylandswaine village, part of a group of buildings with open farmland on three sides. It originally formed part of a range of farm buildings attached to Pinfold Farm. A cruck barn, it has a Grade 2 listing (IoE Number: 334043), though it was converted to a dwelling in 2005 (applications ref B/03/1488/PR and B/03/1489/PR/LB). The dwelling faces onto a courtyard to the north westward, on the opposite side of which is another former agricultural building also converted to a dwelling as part of the same development, and beyond a modern bungalow. Directly to the south east lies the former farmhouse.

History

Planning permission and listed building consent were granted in 2003 (ref B/03/1488/PR and B/03/1489/PR/LB) for the conversion of the listed building and facing barn to form two dwellings. The scheme included the demolition of an agricultural building attached to the facing barn, and its replacement with a kitchen and garage extension of smaller dimensions. In addition a building used as a farm shop was demolished and replaced by a double garage, of similar floor area, 4.8m from The Laithe. Several other large agricultural buildings were demolished as part of this scheme. The listed building was converted in 2005.

Because of what was described in a letter from the Council dated 19th July 2005 as "severe deformation of the timber structure, and its effect to the walls, especially the north –east gable", considerable rebuilding works were agreed to. The Council stated "I see no real alternative to your plan to remove the stone slates and rafters, take down the walls and straighten the cruck frame. The frame could be restrained by the inner leaf of the rebuilt walls, which should keep it square. I considered this work is essential in order to retain the listed building". All the walls were progressively provided with new foundations and rebuilt, and the cruck frame straightened.

The Proposal

It is intended to erect a room linking the garage to the dwelling. This will be 4.4m x 4.8m , constructed in natural stone of a similar small size to that of the garage and the immediately adjoining part of barn, and with a stone slate roof. The window opening will be surrounded by quoins, with a reclaimed oak lintel.

Policy

It is considered that development raises three basic policy issues, the impact on the Green Belt, the amenities of adjoining residents, and the appearance of the listed building and its setting.

Green Belt

National policy as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 , paragraph 3.4 states that limited extension of existing dwellings is not inappropriate development within the Green Belt. Paragraph 3.6 further clarifies this by stating that "Provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, the extension or alteration of dwellings is not inappropriate in Green Belts." It also states that "Development plans should make clear the approach local planning authorities will take."

Current Council policy is set out in the Unitary Development Plan. Following the advice of paragraph 3.6 of PPG2, Policy GS8E states that "proposals to extend dwellings in the Green Belt will be permitted provided that the total size of the proposed and previous extensions does not exceed the size of the original dwelling and the original dwelling forms the dominant visual feature of the dwelling as extended."

The existing dwelling, excluding garage, has a total floorspace of 130m². The linking room will have a gross floorspace of 21m². This would give an increased floorspace of 16%. There will also be a net floorspace of 18m² created within the roofspace of the garage, although the UDP states that "floorspace within roof space will not be taken into account" when calculating increases in floorspace for UDP policy GS8E. However, if this is also included, this would result in a 30% increase in floorspace, which falls well below the Council's policy of 100%, and in any case could not be regarded as a "disproportionate addition". The small extension and the lifting of the roof of the garage will leave the main building forming the "dominant visual feature of the dwelling as extended." Any impact on the openness of the area will be limited by small scale of the development, screening by surrounding buildings, and the fact that a high wall already exists on the north eastern boundary between the garage and dwelling.

Paragraph 3.15 of Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 adds the additional requirement that "The visual amenities of the Green Belt should not be injured by proposals for development within or conspicuous from the Green Belt which, although they would not prejudice the purposes of including land in Green Belts, might be visually detrimental by reason of their siting, materials or design."

Unitary Development Plan policy GS8E similarly requires that "new construction is of a high standard of design and in particular reflects the architecture of the building and/or vernacular styles in the locality, and the development will not adversely affect the amenity of local residents or the appearance of the locality." Policy GS9, similarly reflecting paragraph 3.15 of PPG 2 requires that "development within the green belt, or conspicuous from it, should not by reason of its siting, materials or design result in significant harm to the visual amenity of the green belt."

The Green Belt issue of visual amenity will be dealt with below in connection with the listed building policies.

Residential amenity

Policy GS8E states that "new construction should not "not adversely affect the amenity of local residents", and Policy H8E that extensions to dwellings "should not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring properties." Further guidance is contained in Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 4, House Extensions. No windows are proposed that could directly overlook adjoining properties, and the extensions will not overshadow neighbouring dwellings.

Appearance

Unitary Development Plan policy BE6 seeks to achieve good design standards for all types of development, with particular regard to "the standard of detailed design and facing materials of proposed buildings", while Policy H8E requires that extension to dwellings should be of a scale and design which harmonises with the existing building and maintain the character of the street scene. National Green Belt policy as set out in Paragraph 3.15 of PPG2 requires that new developments should not "be visually detrimental by reason of their siting, materials or design."

The proposed scheme incorporates matching materials, and a design reflecting that of the existing buildings, and so clearly achieves these basic standards. However, because the former barn is a listed building, a much higher standard of sympathetic design is required.

Listed status

Relevant Unitary Development Plan policies are BE2 which states that "development which would adversely affect the special architectural or historic interest character of listed buildings will not be permitted," and BE2A "the Council will seek to preserve and enhance the settings of listed buildings."

National policy Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment advises that "local planning authorities should seek to identify and assess the particular significance of any element of the historic environment that may be affected by the relevant proposal". The two elements affected here are the obscuring of a small window in the barn, and the fact that the building would be no longer free standing.

The linking extension has been carefully designed to give the appearance of a converted cart shed, a simple structure faced in natural stone with stone slate roof. It will also incorporate an oak lintel to the square-headed opening, with a quoined surround. This is in harmony with a similar opening in the wall of the listed building adjacent to the extension. It should be noted that this latter opening is specifically included as one of the building's important features in the listing description ("Central square-headed cart entrance with oak lintel and quoined surround"). Windows will be framed in dark stained timber to match those in the barn. Pointing will be carried out using a lime mortar mix, as was used on the rebuilt walls. The extent of renovation that has taken place on the barn when conversion took place is such that the stonework and pointing on the extensions proposed will not appear dissimilar. The one feature that will be lost with the extension is a small window. It is considered that the loss of this and the fact that the building is no longer completely free standing will not materially harm the character of the building. The attachment of barns to other farm buildings around a courtyard is a common feature of historic farmsteads, and would not appear incongruous.

The first floor extension to the garage building will again be constructed in matching stone and the stone tiles re-used. Window openings have been excluded to achieve a more agricultural appearance, and with the wall height increased to something similar to the original buildings either side of the courtyard, it is considered that the building as extended will be more harmonious with its surroundings than the existing garage. It will not have a neutral impact but will improve the setting of the listed building by making the garage building more sympathetic in appearance to the historical, agricultural setting. This is in accord with PPS5 which states that "Local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment."