

Penderfyniad ar yr Apêl

Ymweliad â safle a wnaed ar 13/05/2020

**gan K Sheffield BA(Hons) DipTP
MRTPI**

Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru

Dyddiad: 26.08.2020

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13/05/2020

by K Sheffield BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Date: 26.08.2020

Appeal Ref: APP/H6955/A/19/3243577

Site address: Rodens Hall Farm, Bowling Bank, Wrexham, LL13 9RS

The Welsh Ministers have transferred the authority to decide this appeal to me as the appointed Inspector.

- 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 M & P Brereton against the decision of Wrexham County Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P/2019/0761, dated 25/09/2019, was refused by notice dated 02/12/2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a grain dryer store.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. The development to which this appeal relates has already been carried out.
3. Due to the travel restrictions surrounding COVID-19 my site visit was delayed until 13 May 2020 when, with the agreement of the parties, I was able to access the site and the building in question.

Application for costs

4. An application for costs was made by the Appellant against the Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the countryside.

Reasons

6. The appeal site forms part of an arable farm which extends to approximately 115 hectares. Whilst the site is in the open countryside, there are various residential and farming properties scattered across the area, including a large complex of agricultural buildings on the neighbouring farm to the east of the appeal site. The appeal building is an extension to an existing modern agricultural building used for the storage of machinery and grain. The existing building is sited parallel with the adjacent highway and is screened in views from the road by the boundary hedge. It is typical of modern agricultural buildings and does not appear out of character with the local area.
-

7. As a result of the growth of the business in recent years the volume of grain produced has increased to the extent that a larger dryer than the one housed within the existing building is required. However, the height of the existing building is not sufficient to accommodate the proposed new 20 tonne dryer, hence the requirement for the extension subject of the appeal.
8. The steel portal framed extension lies to the rear of the existing building and is open on two sides. It measures approximately 10.0 metres by 12.12 metres and is approximately 7.62 metres to the eaves and 8.83 metres to the ridge. Whilst the design and materials of the extension are in keeping with the main building, the extension is approximately 0.83 metres higher. There is also a significant difference in the eaves heights of the two connecting elevations which has created a significant step in the overall outline of the building and has resulted in an awkward and incongruous relationship between the two parts.
9. Whilst the extension has increased the overall mass of the building, its location to the rear of the existing building limits views of it from the adjacent highway and from the gateway into the site it does not look out of place. Notwithstanding this the existing building and the extension are visible from more distant vantage points. Although some of the views are broken by roadside hedges, the height and the open outline of the extension together with the relationship to the existing building make it a prominent and incongruous feature in the landscape.
10. It is acknowledged that the design and materials of the extension are in keeping with the existing building and reflect other agricultural buildings in the area. Nonetheless, I am concerned that the extension creates a prominent feature in the landscape to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area and contrary to Policies PS2, EC3 and GDP1(a) of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan, 2005 which seek to ensure development makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the area.
11. It is recognised that the business is growing and that a larger dryer would aid its viability. However, the effect of the larger dryer on the viability of the business has to be balanced against the effect of the development on the landscape. In this instance I am not satisfied by the evidence that the balance is in favour of the appeal.
12. The Appellant has indicated that the height of the extension could be reduced by changing the design of the air vent. Enclosure of the open sides and additional planting together with allowing the hedges to grow in height have also been suggested as ways of helping the assimilation of the building into the landscape. However, I do not consider that the changes proposed would be sufficient to overcome the harm I have identified.
13. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal be dismissed.
14. In reaching my decision I have considered the requirements of sections 3 and 5 of the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. I consider that this decision is in accordance with the Act's sustainable development principle, through its contribution towards the Welsh Ministers' well-being objective to build better environments.

K. Sheffield

INSPECTOR