



Penderfyniad ar yr Apêl

Ymweliad â safle a wnaed ar 06/09/12

**gan Siân Worden BA DipLH MCD
MRTPI**

**Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru
Dyddiad: 30/10/12**

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 06/09/12

by Siân Worden BA DipLH MCD MRTPI

**an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers
Date: 30/10/12**

Appeal Ref: APP/H6955/A/12/2179613

**Site address: Pentre Fron Farm, Pentre Fron Road, Coedpoeth, Wrexham
LL11 3BU**

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 Mrs Gail Jones against the decision of Wrexham County Borough Council.
 - The application Ref COE P/2012/0302, dated 24 April 2012, was refused by notice dated 19 June 2012.
 - The development proposed is a barn conversion to provide a two bedroom dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider that the main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the countryside.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is in a countryside setting on the edge of Coedpoeth and the proposal is to convert the barn there into a dwelling. The Council has no significant concerns with regard to the proposed design of the building, parking, access or ecology and I have no reason to disagree with that position.
4. Although its original scale and character are still apparent the existing building is in a severely dilapidated state; in particular it has no roof and parts of both internal and external walls lean significantly. The appellant's structural survey finds that the building would require significant repair and refurbishment. As well as a new roof and installation of a first floor work would include the restraint of leaning walls, some repair of elevations and the replacement of the timber lintels.
5. The Council's local planning guidance note No. 3 *Converting Rural Buildings* (LPG) states clearly that buildings which are roofless, as this one is, are not suitable for conversion. Despite the leans the structural survey records that the condition of the walls is generally fair to good. Nevertheless the proposals would involve the relocation and thus reconstruction of the gable wall on the rear elevation. This would be likely to amount to the rebuilding of a larger proportion of the walls than the 10%

normally allowed in the LPG in circumstances where the roof structure must also be rebuilt.

6. The appellant has pointed out that the LPG refers to the restoration of missing sections of roof and to their rebuilding, the implication being that such works might be acceptable. My interpretation is that they would normally only be carried out where at least a part of the original roof remained in place. In any event I do not consider that the guidance is contradictory.
7. The structural survey concludes that the building is robustly constructed and suitable for conversion. To my mind however, its current state, particularly the complete lack of a roof no matter how this came about, and the amount of work which would be required indicate that it would not be capable of conversion without extensive rebuilding. The proposed development would therefore be tantamount to the erection of a new dwelling contrary to Policy H3 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011, adopted 2005, and thus harmful to the countryside.
8. I have noted that a new roof would not require planning permission but, as I consider it unlikely that one of any substance would be provided whilst the building is in its existing condition, I have given this little weight. Renewing pointing and installing a damp proof course and concrete floors are the usual repair and modernisation works that any dwelling might need and I have taken this into account in considering the condition of the existing building. The late submission of the appellant's structural report, which was clearly unintentional, has had no bearing on my decision and I am also aware of the reservations with regard to the 1999 report on the barn provided by the Council. I have taken all the matters raised into account but not found any which would outweigh the harm caused.
9. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Siân Worden

Inspector