



Appeal Decision

by N Jones BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Decision date: 2023-03-09

Appeal reference: CAS-02336-N9Q0R9

Site address: Cefn Coed Farm, Nannys Lane, Kingcoed, NP15 1DS

- 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 Mr Michael Robins against the decision of Monmouthshire County Council.
 - The application Ref DM/2022/01298 dated 5 September 2022 was refused by notice dated 20 October 2022.
 - The development proposed is erection of porch on northern elevation.
 - A site visit was made on 14 February 2023.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for erection of porch on the northern elevation at Cefn Coed Farm, Nannys Lane, Kingcoed, NP15 1DS, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DM/2022/01298 dated 5 September 2022, subject to the conditions set out in the schedule to this decision letter.

Procedural Matter

2. Planning permission was granted to convert the barn into a dwelling under permission reference DC/2015/00705, and further alterations to the barn were approved under permission reference DM/2022/00620. Conversion works were ongoing at the time of my visit. The application is solely for the erection of a porch on the northern elevation, and I have considered the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the building and the wider area.

Reasons

4. The barn is a large stone structure more or less parallel with a minor road and forming part of a complex of residential units and other buildings around an internal courtyard. The proposal seeks to add a porch to the north elevation of the building which faces away from the road.

5. Monmouthshire Local Development Plan (LDP) Policy H4 deals with the conversion and rehabilitation of buildings in the open countryside for residential use. Its criteria are also applied to proposals to extend buildings that have already been converted, including that the form, bulk and general design of the proposal, including any extensions, respect the rural character and design of the building. I saw that the proposed porch would be subordinate to the host building. It would be set down well below the high eaves of the barn and its width would occupy only a short length of that building's north elevation, and so would be subservient to it in bulk and form. Its proposed arrow split opening would reflect existing openings in the barn. It would also utilise stone and timber cladding, respecting existing external materials. From its front, its proposed function as a porch would be discernible. Even so, I consider the intended angular form, flat roof and glazing would create a contemporary feature which would not be overtly domestic in appearance. Due to its modern form, it would not follow the existing traditional agricultural character of the building advocated within the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance 'Conversion of Agricultural Buildings Design Guide' (SPG). Nevertheless, it would be visually distinguished from the host building and so retain the barn's identity as the primary building.
6. In terms of its effects on the character and appearance of the wider area, the proposal would be largely screened from roadside views by the barn and other buildings. Moreover, from its rear and side, I agree with the appellant's contention that the proposed timber-clad indented rear wall of the porch and its parapet stone wall projection would largely create the effect of a garden wall, respecting the rural setting of the building. I saw that localised short views of the proposal would be available from the nearby public footpath. However, in these views, the proposal would be seen in the context of other buildings as well as the contemporary feature of the large opening in the rear elevation of the curved roof barn alongside. Given this, together with its proposed subservient scale and stone finish, it would respect the existing form of the setting and rural character of the building.
7. I conclude that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the building or wider area. It would therefore comply with LDP Policy H4 and Policy DES1 which states that all development should be of a high quality sustainable design and respect the local character and distinctiveness of Monmouthshire's built, historic and natural environment by, amongst other things, respecting the existing form, scale, siting, massing, materials and layout of its setting. It would also align with the objectives of SPG advice.

Other Matters

8. I have had regard to the appellant's contention regarding the structural function of the proposed porch in creating stability to the main barn. However, the engineer's report doesn't demonstrate that this is the only available option for this part of the building. I therefore afford this aspect little weight. My attention was drawn to other conversion schemes in the locality where additions to buildings have been permitted. However, their scale and nature are different to the appeal proposal which I have considered on its individual merits.

Conditions

9. I have considered the Council's suggested conditions in the light of Circular 016/2014 The Use of Planning Conditions for Development Management ('the Circular'). I agree that a condition requiring a scheme of biodiversity enhancement is necessary so that the development is in accordance with national planning policy.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

11. In reaching my decision, I have taken into account 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 one or more of the Welsh Minister's wellbeing objectives as required by section 8 of the Act.

N Jones

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

1. The development shall begin not later than five years from the date of this decision.
Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents: 4b /Por01 Proposed Courtyard Entrance Porch, Location Plan.
Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans submitted with the application.
3. Prior to the commencement of development, a Scheme of Ecological Enhancement Measures and a Detailed Implementation Timetable shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The Ecological Enhancement Measures shall thereafter be undertaken in accordance with the approved scheme and Implementation Timetable and retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.
Reason: In the interests of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, in accordance with Future Wales Policy 9.