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DEVELOPMENT LTD

REPORT

Planning, Design & Access, and Heritage Statement

Proposed detached garage to serve farmhouse.

Dislingbury Farm House
Half Moon Lane
Tudeley
TN11 0PS

Site Location & Description

This is a planning application for the erection of a detached garage building to serve a recently refurbished Grade II Listed farmhouse.

In terms of the farmhouse itself, the full listing description is included as follows:

Details

TQ 64 SW CAPEL HALF MOON LANE (off)

5/265 Dislingbury Farmhouse

II

Farmhouse. Late C17, possibly earlier origins. Timber-framed on brick footings, clad with weatherboarding; brick stack and chimneyshaft; peg-tile roof.

Plan: Farmhouse faces south west. It has a 3-room-and-through-passage plan. Unheated former service room at the right (south east) end. It is separated from the hall by the passage and parlour at the left end. Axial stack between hall and parlour serves back-to-back fireplaces. Stairs rise from parlour between stack and front wall. Despite its plan-form which suggests medieval origins what was seen on the ground floor suggests it is wholly C17. Maybe the roof would provide evidence of earlier origins.

2 storeys with attics in the roofspace and lean-to outshots across the back.

Exterior: Regular but not symmetrical 3-window front of C20 casements with glazing bars. Small fourth ground floor window lighting the stairs left of centre. Front doorway is right of centre and contains a C20 door. Roof is half-hipped both ends.

Interior: Not available for inspection at the time of this survey but plain C17 carpentry detail was seen on the ground floor. Hall and parlour have plain chamfered axial beams and both fireplaces are brick with plain oak lintels.

Listing NGR: TQ6313444020

Until recently, the house had been unoccupied for some time and had fallen into disrepair. It is located to the south of Half Moon Lane, within a distinctly rural setting. There is a former hospital building that sits to the east of the farmhouse, at a right angle. By virtue of its relationship with / proximity to the farmhouse, the hospital building is considered by the Council to be a non-designated heritage asset. The buildings, as they recently existed, are detailed in the following photographs:





Planning permission and listed building consent were granted under reference 22/0340 and 22/0341 for a two storey extension and essential repairs to the farmhouse, and for residential conversion of the former hospital building. That planning permission has been implemented.

Beyond issues relating to heritage planning, the site also falls outside of any of the Limits to Built Development, and within the Green Belt and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Description of Proposal

The application proposes the erection of a detached garage building to serve the farmhouse. The building follows the simple rural vernacular, and it is to be faced in feather edged weatherboarding and clay tiles, to match the farmhouse.

The building would be sited between the farmhouse and the road frontage.

Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications be determined in accordance with the policies of the relevant development plan documents, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Regard must also be had to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

In this case, the development plan comprises the 'saved' policies of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2006, and the Core Strategy 2010.

Another important material consideration is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the latest iteration of which was published in December 2023.

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for sustainable development and positive growth. The Framework prescribes a 'presumption in favour' of sustainable development (Paragraph 11) and supports proposals that are in accordance with the policies of an up-to-date development plan.

The NPPF considers that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve, and states at Paragraph 131, that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work, and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of an area, are visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history, establish or maintain a strong sense of place, optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate mix of development and support local facilities and transport networks, and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

In terms of heritage issues, Paragraph 200 of the NPPF requires that:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Paragraph 203 advises that:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 205 of the NPPF states that:

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be).

Finally, for the purposes of heritage planning, paragraph 208 of the NPPF suggests that:

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Aside from heritage issues, regard must also be had to the fact that the site falls within the Green Belt. The NPPF advises that the primary purpose of Green Belt is to keep land permanently open. This is achieved by resisting 'inappropriate development'. However, at Paragraphs 154 and 155 of the NPPF it also defines that which comprises 'appropriate development' (i.e. development which is acceptable). This includes:

the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

The provision of a garage to serve an existing dwelling represents an extension to that dwelling, and it is these terms that the proposal should be judged.

At a more local level, regard must be had to Policy H11 of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan.

Policy H11 refers to extensions to dwellings, and ancillary outbuildings, in the countryside (and Green Belt). It advises that proposed outbuildings will be granted planning permission

in the following circumstances:

1. The existing dwelling was designed, constructed or converted for residential use and was built on permanent foundations on the site;
2. The extension would be modest and in scale with the original dwelling and would not dominate it visually or result in a poorly proportioned building or detract from its character or setting; or
3. The dwelling as extended would not lend itself to future sub-division to form a separate dwelling.

Supporting information

Reflecting on the foregoing policy context, it is clear that the proposal is capable of comprising appropriate development in the Green Belt, subject to matters of detail.

Those detailed considerations will be the 'tests' established by Policy H11 of the Local Plan, and the impact of the proposal on the setting of the heritage asset.

With regard to Policy H11:

the farmhouse was obviously designed and constructed for residential use;
the proposed garage is modest in scale with the original dwelling and it will not visually dominate or detract from the setting; and
the garage is not of a size or siting that would lend itself to use as a separate dwelling.

In terms of the heritage asset, the garage proposed is (as described above) modest in scale, and with a traditional and simple form, design, and facing materials that would be expected of an outbuilding to serve a farmhouse such as this. Moreover, the provision of garaging will have the effect of reducing the number of cars parked on the driveway, which will serve to enhance the setting.

The proposal will not negatively impact on, or detract from, the setting of the Listed Building.

Finally, there are no neighbouring properties that could suffer any detriment through a loss of light or privacy from the proposed development.

Conclusion

For the reasons explored above, it is clear that this proposal is compliant with planning policy. As such, it is hoped that a grant of planning permission will be forthcoming in due course.

