

Conversion of a Building to create Ancillary Living Accommodation Associated with Blakes Lane Farm

The Proposal

This application seeks planning permission for the conversion of the existing redundant building to create ancillary accommodation for an elderly parent and form a home based business office and ancillary accommodation for guests.

Ancillary Use – An Explanation

The accommodation is for ancillary use associated with the principal residence, Blakes Lane Farm, and not for the purposes of separate accommodation or a dwelling its own right.

The ancillary building would provide additional space for guests, elderly family members and a home office for the homeowners business which is online based. The converted building would allow guests to prepare light meals and a bathroom ensures convenience whilst remaining subordinate to the main house and does not alter the primary function of Blakes Lane Farm which will be used for everyday living. The ancillary accommodation is a secondary living space allowing multigenerational living associated with the primary dwelling. It allows some degree of independence while allowing elderly parents to be cared for.

Planning policies

The following policies are relevant to the determination of this application.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (revised on 20 Dec 2023)
Green Belt – NPPF para 155

NPPF policy 155 finds some forms of development are not inappropriate in the Green Belt providing they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it, including in para 155 section d), the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction.

There would be no physical external alteration to the building itself. The domestic activity would be a reduction in paraphernalia associated with equestrian uses. No domestic activity would encroach onto the fields and would not upset the openness of the Green Belt.

The second part of para 155 suggests it must be capable of conversion. The main structural components of the existing building are in good condition with a steel ridge. The timber rafters supporting the roof are already covered with tiles, and there are no plans to alter the roof or require additional reinforcement. Overall, the building is stable, and converting it into a residential space will not compromise its stability.

The proposal would accord with paragraph 155 of the NPPF.

Housing for Older people - Paragraph 63 of the NPPF

As this application will assist in an elderly parent to be looked after, it is worth noting the increased emphasis in the new NPPF published in December 2023. Housing for older people was a major change in the new NPPF which adds support to our proposal. Para 63 of the NPPF now expands what is meant for housing for older people. There is increased support in the updated PPG and an increasingly aging population is identified as a critical need. This was also supported in the Ministerial Statement on 19th December 2023 which accompanied the new NPPF where it encouraged the delivery of older people's housing and it was further supported on 21 December 2023 in the message from the Chief Planner, Joanna Averley.

Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites (adopted by Council on 25 April 2019)

Policy P2 of the adopted LP confirms its policy will be applied in line with the NPPF and we demonstrate above the proposal accords with the NPPF.

Character and Appearance of the Area

No alteration to the external part of the building is proposed and there would be no change to the character and appearance of the area.

Access and Parking

Historically this was a commercial stable yard. There are currently no horses on site but if there were horses, this would generate potentially up to 10 vehicle movements daily with external people coming to look after their horses. There would be no traffic generated by this proposal other than guests or family members. There would be no clients visiting the home office. The traffic generated by the former commercial livery stable or the existing building if in full use is more than the traffic associated with the proposal.

Impact on neighbour amenity

There are no dwellings within 300 metres of the proposed site. The separation of over 300 metres would ensure there would be no adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring dwellings.

Other policies

The NPPF policy 88 states that Planning Policies and decision should enable the sustainable growth and expansion in rural areas through conversion of existing buildings.

Conclusion

The proposed development would result in the conversion of a building that is structurally sound and would create residential accommodation which is in line with the objectives of the NPPF and adopted policy. This proposal is a form of development within the exceptions listed in paragraph 155 of the NPPF (NPPF 2023).