

APPEAL BY MR & MRS CORNES AGAINST THE DECISION OF THE COUNCIL TO REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OF A BARN INTO AN ENERGY EFFICIENT FAMILY HOME INCLUDING THE REMOVAL OF AN EXTENSION AND REDUNDANT PORTAL FRAME BARN AND THE ADDITION OF A SMALL REAR EXTENSION AND MULTIPLE USE SMALL OUTBUILDING AT GRANGE FARM, SCHOOL LANE, ONNELEY, CREWE

<u>Application Number</u>	13/00739/FUL
<u>LPA's Decision</u>	Refused by delegated powers 19th November 2014
<u>Appeal Decision</u>	Allowed
<u>Date of Appeal Decision</u>	8th July 2014

The full text of the appeal decision is available to view on the Council's website (as an associated document to application 13/00739/FUL) and the following is only a brief summary.

The Inspector considered the main issue to be whether any adverse impacts of the appeal proposals would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. In dismissing the appeal, the Inspector made the following key comments:

- It is apparent that a five-year supply of deliverable housing land cannot be identified in the area. In these circumstances the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that local policies on housing supply should be considered to be out of date (para 49).
- The contribution that a single dwelling would make towards meeting the shortfall would be very small. Nonetheless, the Framework establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which for decision-taking when relevant policies are out of date means applying the test of whether any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole (para 14).
- The existing buildings currently form part of a farmstead consisting of traditional brick and tile buildings and portal buildings of a later period. The appellants' unchallenged evidence indicates that the buildings in question are redundant for agricultural purposes and that the main building is structurally sound and capable of conversion.
- Onneley is a small settlement which, based on observations when visiting the site, has very few services. Beyond Onneley the nearest settlements are Madeley to the east and Woore to the west. Both of these villages are larger than Onneley and together they have a range of services which include primary schools, a secondary school, shops, community buildings and pubs.
- It is concluded that Onneley does not amount to a sustainable community with any significant services and, other than via use of private motor vehicles, it has relatively poor access to services and facilities elsewhere.
- Paragraph 55 of the Framework says that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Isolated homes should be avoided unless there are special circumstances such as where the re-use of a redundant or disused building is involved and it would lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting.
- The 'special circumstances' cited in that paragraph indicate that the Framework envisages that the conversion of a redundant barn could be acceptable even if it were not sustainable development.
- The Framework establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which it identifies as having economic, social and environmental dimensions.
- Significant weight is given to the reuse of the existing building including in terms 'the economic capital of the site' and making 'use of the embodied energy within the barn', and to the application of 'best green practice' to produce a 'low carbon and low energy dwelling'. Only very limited weight is given to other matters identified in the appellant's evidence containing sustainable development.

- The agricultural buildings and structures which would either be converted or demolished sit comfortably within the farmstead and are typical of what one would expect to find in this context both as they appear now and as they might appear in the future if they were to be allowed to deteriorate. Consequently, bearing in mind that the site is not particularly prominent, the benefit of any such improvement would be limited. Nonetheless, the scheme would lead to some enhancement to the immediate setting of the building in the terms of paragraph 55 of the Framework.
- The adverse effect that the proposal would have in terms of its reliance on use of the private motor vehicle to access day to day services weighs against the appeal proposal. However, it would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework when taken as a whole. In these circumstances, planning permission should be granted

Recommendation

That the decision be noted