

## Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 14 March 2016

**by Jonathan Hockley BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government**

**Decision date: 06 April 2016**

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### **Appeal Ref: APP/W0530/W/15/3136328**

#### **The Old Dairy, Manor Farm, Mill Way, Grantchester, Cambridge CB3 9NB**

- 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 Dr Pauline Brimblecombe against the decision of South Cambridgeshire District Council.
  - The application Ref S/1651/15/FL, dated 3 July 2015, was refused by notice dated 18 September 2015.
  - The development proposed is the erection of new garage & studio building. Removal of 4 no. fruit trees and length of recently planted hedgerow.
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### **Appeal Ref: APP/W0530/Y/15/3136331**

#### **The Old Dairy, Manor Farm, Mill Way, Grantchester, Cambridge CB3 9NB**

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
  - The appeal is made by Dr Pauline Brimblecombe against the decision of South Cambridgeshire District Council.
  - The application Ref S/1652/15/LB, dated 3 July 2015, was refused by notice dated 18 September 2015.
  - The works proposed are the erection of new garage & studio building. Removal of 4 no. fruit trees and length of recently planted hedgerow.
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### **Decision**

1. The appeals are dismissed.

### **Main Issue**

2. The main issue in both cases is whether the proposal would preserve the special architectural and historical interest of the listed building, including any effect on the Grantchester Conservation Area and the setting of St Andrew & St Mary Church.

### **Reasons**

3. Manor Farm is an imposing Grade II\* listed property constructed circa 1452 according to the listing. Within the historical site of the Manor House are a range of former agricultural buildings which the Council state were converted to residential units in 1999. These take the form of a 'U' shaped range of buildings located around a central courtyard, which is now used for access and garden areas. The Old Dairy forms the north east corner of the buildings, and is part 2 storey on its northern elevation and single storey along its eastern side. Mill Way passes to the east and is the main road through the village.
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4. There is no dispute between the parties that the grouping of former agricultural buildings can be considered as a curtilage structure forming part of the setting of the listed building of Manor Farm. Section 5(2) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) states that any such structure within the curtilage of a listed building shall be treated as part of the listed building. Policies CH/3 to CH/5 of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Development Framework Development Control Policies (the DPD) together state that proposals for extensions to listed buildings and in Conservation Areas will be determined in accordance with legislative provisions and national policy, and that permission will not be granted for development which would adversely affect the curtilage or setting of a listed building.
5. Paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) says when considering the impact of a proposal on the significance of a heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The Framework also makes it clear that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration of a heritage asset, or development within its setting.
6. The significance of The Old Dairy, as far as its exterior is concerned, derives from its association with Manor Farm and the former moated site. Whilst the courtyard is not entirely enclosed, the yard has a clear shape and structure with almost complete enclosure around the north, south and east sides. The western side is open and the extreme north west building is set in a slightly staggered position to the rest of the building form of the yard, although it remains set within the overall building line. Despite the conversion of the buildings, the retention of the coherent simple agricultural courtyard form is a key feature in the setting of Manor Farm.
7. The Grantchester Conservation Area (GCA) covers the historic core of the village and is set around the Grade II\* listed church of St Mary & St Andrew. The character of the GCA is largely distinguished by the architectural quality of many of the buildings in the village, their relationships to each other and the spaces they create, with the overall character of the GCA significantly enhanced by a range of mature landscaping.
8. The proposal seeks to construct a single storey hipped roof extension to the Old Dairy. The proposal would be set off the north east corner of the building extending to the north over an existing driveway, with the main form of the extension heading to the east to house a studio and meeting room. Historic England considers that the proposal would defer to the form and character of the existing building and would be unlikely to detract from the character of the conservation area. They also consider that the proposal would be consistent with the Framework in respect of conservation policies and note that the scheme is less obtrusive than a previous proposal.
9. I agree that the height and size of the proposal would be subordinate to the existing building; however, the proposal would mark a change to the character of the existing rectangular form of the courtyard buildings. I note that the western end of the courtyard is not fully coherent; however the inset building at the north-west end is set within the overall form and the building line of the courtyard and as such is easily assimilated into the overall structure. By contrast, the junction and attachment of the proposed extension and its dogleg form primarily to the east would adversely affect the original form of the courtyard. Such an impact would also adversely affect the setting of Manor Farm, and would also fail to preserve or enhance the historic character of the GCA to which the buildings make an important contribution. However, due to the hipped roof and an existing brick wall separating the Old Dairy from Mill Way, the extension would only be visible from

- certain angles on the street and I do not consider that the size or extent of the proposal would have an adverse effect on the setting of the more distant Church.
10. The appellant notes a previous extension to the Old Dairy and considers that the relationships between the various buildings in the farmyards have evolved over time and are the product of practical decisions about agricultural needs, and that the proposal is entirely consistent with this pattern of evolution. However, in my view the proposal would be viewed as a break from this evolution. The extension would not appear to form an extension formed to meet an agricultural need and would have a more domestic appearance due to its effect on the overall structure of the courtyard.
  11. Historical maps have also been submitted, showing some possible structures in the vicinity of the proposed extension. However, it is not clear what these structures entailed; from the thickness and form of them it is possible that they were merely boundary treatments or structures and I do not consider that they therefore justify the proposal in this instance.
  12. The Framework makes it clear that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a listed building, great weight should be given to its conservation. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration of the heritage asset, and as they are irreplaceable, any harm should require clear and convincing justification. For the reasons given above, I consider the proposal would result in harm being caused to the significance of the listed building and to the character of the GCA. However, due to the size and low slung nature of the proposal, I am satisfied in this case that the degree of harm caused would be less than substantial.
  13. In such situations this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of a proposal, including securing the asset's optimum use. The extension would enhance the appellants' enjoyment of the property and lead to an easier and more conducive home working environment for the appellant and her husband. However, leaving aside whether the appellants' enjoyment of the property can be properly regarded as a public benefit, it appears to function as a dwelling already. It is well maintained and from the outside is seemingly in good repair, and it has not been shown that its continued occupation is in anyway dependent on the proposed development. As a consequence, what public benefits there might be are insufficient to outweigh the harm caused.

*Conclusion – Appeals A and B*

14. To summarise I consider that the proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed building, and would not preserve its special architectural or historic interest. Whilst I do not consider that the scheme would harm the setting of St Andrew & St Mary Church, the proposal would not preserve or enhance the character of the Grantchester Conservation Area. It has not been shown that public benefits would outweigh this harm, and the proposal would conflict with the Framework and the DPD Policies CH/3, CH/4 and CH/5. Therefore, for the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeals should fail.

*Jon Hockley*

INSPECTOR