

09.04.2009



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 September 2009

by **Paul Griffiths** BSc(Hons) BArch IHBC

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

The Planning Inspectorate
4/11 Eagle Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6PN

☎ 0117 372 6372
email: enquiries@pins.gsi.gov.uk

Decision date:
24 September 2009

Appeal Ref: APP/C3430/A/09/2105865

Bobington House, Six Ashes Road, Bobington DY7 5BY

- 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 Ross against the decision of South Staffordshire Council.
- The application Ref.08/01233/FUL, dated 22 December 2008, was refused by notice dated 9 April 2009.
- The development proposed is demolition of former garage block with planning permission to convert to self-contained accommodation and replacement with two-storey self-contained accommodation.

Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal.

Main Issues

2. These are (1) whether the proposal is an inappropriate form of development in the Green Belt; (2) the effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt; and (3) the effect of the proposal on the setting of Bobington House, a Grade II listed building.

Reasons

3. The accommodation proposed would be self-contained but ancillary to Bobington House. As such, while not physically connected, it would act as an expansion of the function of the main dwelling that would be located relatively close to it. In that context, for the purposes of assessing whether or not the proposal would be inappropriate, or not, it seems to me that it should be treated in a manner akin to an extension of the dwelling.
4. Paragraph 3.6 of Planning Policy Guidance: *Green Belts* (PPG2) says provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the *original* building, the extension or alteration of dwellings is not inappropriate in Green Belts. Policy GB1 of the South Staffordshire Local Plan (LP) states that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless, of relevance, it is the limited extension of an existing dwelling.
5. The proposal would replace an existing garage block that has an extant permission for conversion to ancillary accommodation, and a stable building. From the planning history submitted, I glean that these are themselves, relatively recent additions. I also saw that Bobington House has been extended, to a significant degree, not too long ago.

6. I appreciate that the new building would be two-storey and therefore higher than the existing buildings it would replace but there would be a significant reduction in built footprint on the site as a consequence of the proposal. In this light, I take the view that, overall, the proposal would not represent a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building and it can be defined as a limited extension. As such, the proposal would not be an inappropriate form of development in the Green Belt and it would comply with LP Policy GB1. On top of that, for much the same reasons, the proposal would lead to an increase in the openness of the Green Belt. Paragraph 1.4 of PPG2 tells us that the most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness.
7. However, it seems to me that the existing garage block and stable are both simple buildings that are clearly subordinate to Bobbington House in function and appearance. The garage would remain subordinate if the extant planning permission for conversion was implemented. The proposal before me would be much more complex in form and would have the appearance of a separate dwelling within the curtilage of the listed building. In my view, it would lack deference and far from sharing attributes of Bobbington House, the proposed building would have a rather suburban appearance. As such, it would appear incongruous in relation to the adjoining listed building and significantly harm its setting. This would be contrary to LP Policy BE26 and advice in Planning Policy Guidance: *Planning and the Historic Environment* (PPG15).
8. Drawing these points together, the proposal would not be inappropriate and it would increase the openness of the Green Belt. However, it would harm the setting of Bobbington House, a Grade II listed building. On balance, I place more weight on the latter factor because there seems to me no reason why the accommodation required could not be designed in a way that achieved the same as that before me in Green Belt terms, without the harmful impact on the setting of the listed building.
9. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Paul Griffiths

INSPECTOR