



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 February 2010

by **D R Cullingford** BA MPhil MRTPI

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

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Decision date:
18 February 2010

Appeal Refs: **APP/T9501/A/09/2116120 & APP/T9501/E/09/2116890** **The Barn, East Newton Farm, Newtown, Rothbury, Northumberland, NE65 7NN**

- These appeals are made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission and under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
- The appeals are by Peter Henry against the decisions of the Northumberland National Park Authority.
- The applications (refs: 09NP0028 and 09NP0029LBC, respectively, both dated 16 June 2009) were refused by notices dated 3 August 2009.
- The development and the work proposed is described as the 'the erection of 2 porches'.

Decision

1. For the reasons given below, and in exercise of the powers transferred to me, I dismiss these appeals.

Reasons

2. No-one from the Authority was able to attend the site inspection, I think due to difficulties in notification arrangements. In the circumstances, I completed the inspection with the appellant.
3. The Barn is part of an attractive conversion of the ancient stone farmstead at East Newton Farm, initially approved back in 2002. The farmhouse is a Listed Building (grade II) and the Barn would have formed part of the 'courtyard' of stone barns and granaries within its curtilage. I saw that the conversion has been undertaken with great care, the new uses (dwellings, holiday cottages and offices) being accommodated within structures retaining almost all of the crucial characteristics, as well as the form and appearance, of the original buildings. In particular, the pattern and size of the fenestration reflects the position and scale of the original openings and the simple robust exterior of the original agricultural buildings remain evident.
4. The proposal is to erect 2 porches. The first would project about 1.8m from the long plain west elevation of the Barn; it would consist of dwarf stone walls supporting an oak timber frame beneath a slate roof reaching 3.5m high at the ridge. The second would be a modest wooden structure beneath a shallow lead roof across a corner of an internal courtyard. The Authority have refused both permission and consent because they consider that neither structure would reflect the style of the farmstead or the setting of this Listed Building. In their view such development would contravene policies P3 and P18 of the Core Strategy and fail to comply with the statutory duty to carefully consider the

desirability of preserving the settings of Listed Buildings, as required by section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Those are the issues on which this appeal turns.

5. Although both porches would utilise natural materials and exhibit some traditional characteristics both would be seen as domestic structures and, for that reason alone, detract from the simple agricultural outlines still evident at the Barn. The dwarf stone walls, the dimension of the doors and openings and the shallow roof slope of the 'internal' structure would all contribute to that impression, in my view. The porch on the western elevation would interrupt a long, plain and linear façade, so altering a fundamental feature of the building and transforming the prominent western elevation. The porch on the eastern elevation would not be easily seen from any public vantage point. But it would form a domestic excrescence in the corner of this courtyard and thus undermine the relationship between the farmhouse and the agricultural origins of the adjacent buildings. I see that as crucial to the setting of the Listed Building. Hence, I agree with the Authority that these proposals would fail to reflect the character and appearance of this farmstead and impair the setting of this Listed Building, contrary to the statutory duty and operative planning policies that apply.
6. I have considered all the other matters raised. I saw that a stone porch has been constructed at the front of the farmhouse. However, it is clear from the submissions that that structure has replaced a previous porch that existed when the building was Listed. I also saw that a new timber porch has been erected beyond the Barn on the western elevation of the old granary. It is evident that that structure is shown on the drawings approved by the Authority in 2004 for the conversion of the granary to offices. In my view, it exhibits several crucial differences to the appeal proposals. The structure stands towards the far end of the western elevation, so that the long linear façade of the old farmyard buildings remains largely evident: it is not domestic in character, being narrow and boarded and with a fairly steeply pitched roof: and, it relates to a building converted to accommodate a rural business. I am afraid that none of those features apply to the appeal proposals. I thus find nothing sufficiently compelling to alter my conclusion that these appeals should be dismissed.



INSPECTOR