

Agenda Item A11	Committee Date 31 st May 2016	Application Number 16/00357/FUL
Application Site Bank Farm Aldcliffe Hall Lane Lancaster Lancashire		Proposal Demolition of rear WC and first floor balcony, erection of a single storey rear extension with balcony above and relocation of existing external staircase
Name of Applicant Mr & Mrs Higgin		Name of Agent Mr Steve Donnelly
Decision Target Date 16 May 2016		Reason For Delay Committee cycle
Case Officer	Mr Robert Clarke	
Departure	No	
Summary of Recommendation	Approval	

(i) **Procedural Matters**

The proposed development would normally fall within the scheme of delegation. However, the applicant is an employee of Lancaster City Council and as such the proposal must be determined by the Planning Committee.

1.0 The Site and its Surroundings

1.1 The property which forms the subject of this application relates to a two storey detached historic farm house located on Aldcliffe Hall Lane, Aldcliffe. The attached barn located to the side and rear of the dwelling has previously been converted into residential use and now forms part of the dwellinghouse. A small 4.6m² balcony is located to the rear elevation of the barn conversion. The farmhouse is stone-built featuring white-washed walls, whilst the barn is of random rubble construction. Both benefit from a natural slate roof and white timber-framed double glazed units. The site boundary to the sides and rear is formed by a 1.6m high stone retaining wall and a mixed hedge varying in height between 1.8m–2m.

1.2 Bank Farm is located within a prominent location with Aldcliffe Hall Lane to the north, the grade two listed Aldcliffe Cottages located 16m to the south and Aldcliffe Mews 20m to the south-west. The applicant's dwelling forms a focal point within its location with the front elevations of the surrounding properties orientated towards the application site. The surrounding properties are residential in use. Local land levels reduce when heading in a westerly direction, and as such the top of the retaining wall that forms the site boundary also forms the ground level of the dwelling's garden.

1.3 The site is located within the Countryside Area, as identified on the Local Plan Proposals Map. It is also within a Mineral Safeguarding Area.

2.0 The Proposal

2.1 This application proposes the demolition of the existing WC outbuilding and existing balcony, the erection of a single storey rear extension with balcony above and the relocation of the existing external staircase. The proposed extension will project up to a maximum of 3.35m from the rear elevation of the barn conversion and will have a maximum width of 6.7m. The proposed balcony will

be installed on the flat roof of the extension and will project up to 2m from the rear elevation and have a maximum width of 6.1m. The external spiral staircase will be relocated to the side (southern) elevation of the extension. The proposed extension will feature coursed ashlar stone walls, white uPVC bi-folding doors to the rear elevation along with a grey uPVC window to the side (northern) elevation. At balcony level natural stone paving will be used along with a clear, frameless glass 1.1m high balustrade.

3.0 Site History

3.1 The following previous planning applications have been received by the Local Planning Authority.

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
89/00091/HST	Change of use and conversion of barns to form 3 dwellings	Withdrawn
90/00311/HST	Change of use of barn to residential	Permitted
90/00808/HST	Construction of first floor rear balcony	Permitted

4.0 Consultation Responses

4.1 The following responses have been received from statutory and non-statutory consultees:

Consultee	Response
Conservation Section	No objection
County Council Mineral Planning	No response received during the statutory consultation period

5.0 Neighbour Representations

5.1 No neighbour representations received during the statutory consultation period.

6.0 Principal National and Development Plan Policies

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraph **7, 12, 14, 17** – Sustainable Development and Core Principles
 Paragraphs **56-64** – Requiring Good Design
 Paragraphs **131 – 134** – Designated Heritage Assets

6.2 Development Management DPD

DM35 – Key Design Principles
DM28 – Development and landscape impact
DM32 – The setting of Designated Heritage Assets

6.3 Lancaster District Core Strategy (adopted July 2008)

SC1 – Sustainable Development
SC5 – Achieving Quality in Design

6.4 Lancaster District Local Plan Saved Policies

E4 – Countryside Area

7.0 Comment and Analysis

7.1 The main issues to be considered in the determination of this application are:

- General design
- Impacts upon residential amenity
- Impacts upon the Designated Heritage Assets

7.2 General Design

It is considered that the proposed development appears as a contemporary addition to a traditional stone built farm house and barn conversion. The reduced scale of the proposal and inset to the northern elevation ensures the development appears as a subservient addition. Moreover, the extensions flat roof/balcony, sharp yet simple lines as well as the use of contrasting materials aid in the differentiation between the traditional appearance of the dwelling and the proposed contemporary extension. The use of the staircase to the southern elevation and the window to the northern elevation provide a further break between the barn and extension further aiding the separation between traditional and contemporary. These matters all combine to ensure that the principle of the proposal is acceptable.

7.3 Concerns were initially raised regarding the increased scale of the proposed balcony and its potential impacts on residential amenity. It was considered necessary to reduce the balcony and balance the size of the below garden room extension. The use of a lean-to roof either side of an appropriately increased balcony was explored. Due to the relatively low height of the eaves of the barn and its pitched roof it was found that this approach would not be feasible. As such it was necessary to retain the flat roof and restrict the balcony space above by adjusting the extent of the balustrade. This design has given rise to the flat roof extending beyond the balustrade by 1.4m, however, there is a 250mm parapet around the flat roof ensuring the floor level of the balcony and flat roof projection will not be seen. The use of the clear glazed frameless glass balustrade will ensure the visual presence of both the balustrade and the flat roof projection are kept to a minimum. As such the present design approach is considered an acceptable form of development.

7.4 Impacts upon residential amenity

The existing balcony has a usable floor area of 4.6m² a space large enough for standing/a small table lending itself to relatively infrequent use. The initial proposal featured a larger extension, 4.35m deep, with a balcony of 25.2m², this increased size would provide five times more space and would certainly lead to increased usage and likely changed use, and ultimately this was deemed to create an unacceptable relationship with the immediate neighbours.

7.5 However, due to the presence of the existing balcony and the fact that the balcony does not overlook the private amenity space of the nearby neighbours it is considered that an appropriately increased balcony can be supported in this location. Aldcliffe Cottages are located between 16m-18m away from the proposed balcony, views to the front elevation windows of these properties will be obscured by the 2m high hedging (the hedging is approximately 3.5m high when stood outside of the application site) and the reduction in levels land levels. As a result of the existing relationship between the applicant's property and these cottages, an appropriately increased balcony is not considered to result in loss of privacy.

7.6 The reduction in balcony size to 12m² is considered to limit the use of this space lending itself to uses more in line with the existing balcony, thus maintaining the existing relationship. Furthermore, the increase in size is largely in a north-south lateral direction with the depth of the balcony increasing by only 700mm ensuring that the balcony's projection from the rear elevation of the barn is kept to a minimum. As such it is considered the amended scale of the balcony is appropriately sized for this raised location.

7.7 Impacts on the designated heritage assets

In accordance with the Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act, when considering any application that affects a Listed Building, a Conservation Area or their setting, the local planning authority must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the heritage asset or its setting. This is reiterated by policies DM30, DM31 and DM32.

The main consideration is the possible impact on the setting of the adjacent grade two listed Aldcliffe Cottages. The principal setting of the row of cottages is created by the road in front and the views along the terrace from the East and West. The view to the application site is separated by the existing low stone wall and hedge above (3–4 metres) and the garden area beyond. The proposed development site is set back from these immediate sightlines and will be single storey (in stone) with the balcony above featuring a clear frameless glass balustrade to replace a timber structure. In view of the above observations, it is not considered that the proposal will impact/harm the setting of the adjacent listed buildings unduly and is therefore acceptable.

8.0 Planning Obligations

8.1 There are no planning obligations to consider as part of this application.

9.0 Conclusions

9.1 The proposed extension is acceptable in terms of scale, location and design. It is considered the use of contrasting materials and sharp lines successfully differentiate from the traditional appearance of the barn ensuring a sensitive contemporary approach.

9.2 The principle of a balcony in this location is already established, as such it is considered the relatively small increase in its scale to 12m² is an acceptable form of development that will not result in unacceptable detrimental impacts to the residential amenity of the surrounding neighbours.

Recommendation

That Planning Permission **BE GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard three year timescale
2. Development in accordance with plans
3. Amended plan reference: 261/012 Revision B as received by email on the 24/04/2016
4. The balustrade to be fitted must be a Taperloc 9mm tempered clear frameless glass design with no handrail installed
5. The window to the northern side elevation must be a Weru Castello frame with a 68mm frame height in Iron Grey (RAL 7011)

Article 35, Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

In accordance with the above legislation, the City Council can confirm the following:

Lancaster City Council has made the recommendation in a positive and proactive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development, working proactively with the applicant to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. The recommendation has been made having had regard to the impact of development, and in particular to the relevant policies contained in the Development Plan, as presented in full in the officer report, and to all relevant material planning considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework, National Planning Practice Guidance and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance.

Human Rights Act

This recommendation has been reached after consideration of the provisions of The Human Rights Act. Unless otherwise stated in this report, the issues arising do not appear to be of such magnitude to override the responsibility of the City Council to regulate land use for the benefit of the community as a whole, in accordance with national law.

Background Papers

None