

Sack lane Dairy

Design and Access Statement

Context

The site is located on the south side of Sack lane, a short distance to the east of the A29 and the main settlement of Lidsey. The building is sited at the end of a complex of farm buildings and dwellings at the eastern end of Sack Lane. Previously used as a dairy building it is now redundant following the closure of the dairy.

Planning policy

In 2012 the National Planning Policy Framework was introduced and replaced the former Planning Policy Statements. The NPPF has brought about a significant change in relation to the conversion of farm buildings. In particular there is no longer a presumption in favour of commercial conversions over residential conversions. Each are afforded equal weight. Paragraph 55 states that housing can be provided in the rural area where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting.

At the same time the NPPF has introduced a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In this instance the proposal will make use of an existing building that is within easy cycling distance of Lidsey and various community facilities. It is also close to the strategic road network and the wide range of community facilities available in Bognor Regis.

Paragraph 197 of the NPPF states that in assessing and determining applications, local planning authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as the golden thread running through decision taking.

As stated in paragraphs 214 & 215 of the NPPF, up until April 2013 full weight could be given to development plan policies adopted since 2004, even if there was a degree of conflict. Otherwise and following this date due weight should be given to development plan policies according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF.

The preparation of the Arun District Local Plan began in 1998 and it was published in 2003. As such it is based upon much older and now cancelled Government policy and advice and the former Structure Plans. It is out of date, which is reflected in policy DEV2 which states that residential conversions will only be allowed if it has first been demonstrated that reasonable attempts have been made to secure a commercial use first. Also the building should be of historic or architectural merit and is capable of conversion without significant alteration or extension.

Hence, whilst the Arun District Local Plan is the starting point in the consideration of the proposal, its degree of conflict in relation to this proposal is significant. The NPPF carries considerably more weight.

Proposal

The proposal is to convert the building into one family sized dwelling, with associated parking and garden.

The resultant dwelling would have 4 bedrooms, a living room, family room, kitchen and utility room. Externally the garden areas would be contained within part of the existing yard areas. There would be three parking spaces for the dwelling and they would be located within the existing parking area to the northwest of the site.

Appearance, design and scale

The scale of the scheme is dictated by the existing building. The scheme does not involve any extensions to the building. Overall the building will have an internal floor area of some 280m² and is approximately 2 metres wide by 7 metres deep.

In terms of design the scheme does not include any dormer windows and the overall form the building will remain unchanged. The nature and appearance of the proposed openings will be utilitarian and agricultural, with a strong vertical emphasis.

The scheme will be readily assimilated into its surroundings.

Evaluation

Constraints

- Rural location
- The fact that the building exists in terms of siting, size and form
- Its proximity to other dwellings and farm buildings
- The design of the adjacent dwellings and farm buildings

Opportunities

- To bring a redundant building back into use
- To improve the condition and appearance of the building in the long term
- To provide a home for a local families at a time when new house building levels are unacceptably low
- To provide employment for local tradesmen during the current recession
- To help meet the housing needs of Arun District

Access

Access to the site is from Sack lane.

The scheme has been designed to facilitate wheelchair access at ground floor level and the external area is flat and suitable for disabled access.