
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2017

by Jason Whitfield BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 7th February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/J4423/D/16/3163168

2A Beauchief Abbey Lane, Sheffield S8 7BD

- 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 and Mrs Robin and Lyndsey Kon against the decision of Sheffield City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/02870/FUL, dated 27 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 22 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is conversion of existing roof space and construction of cat slide roof dormer.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Beauchief Abbey Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site lies within the Beauchief Abbey Conservation Area which is focussed around Beauchief Abbey Lane. On the eastern side of the lane is the Grade II* Listed Church of St Thomas a Beckett and the remains of the 12th Century Beauchief Abbey, part of which is a Schedule Ancient Monument. There are also several Grade II listed buildings nearby at Beauchief Farm.
 4. Aside from the Church and Abbey, buildings within the conservation area are predominately in residential use and are generally two-storey with pitched, gabled roofs. External walls are largely constructed in stone with stone slate roofs. The area has a predominately semi-rural setting, with the surrounding area dominated by the open landscape of the adjacent golf course. There are key views throughout the conservation area, in particular along Beauchief Abbey Lane.
 5. The significance of the conservation area largely derives from its historical origins, as well as the prevalent use of stone and the well-preserved arrangement of buildings both around Beauchief Abbey and those beside the junction of Abbey Lane and Beauchief Abbey Lane.
 6. The appeal property comprises part of a converted stone barn which is two-storey in height with a pitched, stone slate roof. The barn has been converted into several residential properties and lies within a small cluster of stone
-

buildings arranged around a courtyard. The properties are to the north of Beauchief Abbey, close to the junction of Beauchief Abbey Lane and Abbey Lane, and the suburban residential area to the north. The property abuts Abbey Lane, however, its principal elevation has a southerly aspect, facing onto the courtyard and towards the listed buildings.

7. The properties are identified by the Council as buildings of townscape merit which make a positive contribution to the significance of the conservation area. That merit is particularly apparent in the simple built form of stone walls with pitched roofs largely free from alteration.
8. It is proposed to construct a dormer window on the southern roof slope of the appeal property. Whilst the dormer would cover around one third of the overall roof of the barn, it would extend almost the full width of the appeal property. Moreover, its height would match that of the main roof, with only a limited set back from the eaves.
9. Furthermore, whilst I note the dormer would utilise a catslide roof in stone slate with windows to match the existing property, the external walls would be clad in tiles, in stark contrast to the prevailing palette of materials found within the conservation area. As a consequence, it would result in a dominant and incongruous addition to what is a well-preserved and uniform roofscape largely free from alteration.
10. The dormer window would be readily visible from several vantage points within the area, including in key views along Beauchief Abbey Lane and from notable points within the setting of the conservation area. As a result, the proposal would appear as a discordant and visually intrusive feature.
11. I conclude, therefore, that the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Beauchief Abbey Conservation Area. Consequently, it would conflict with Saved Policies BE5, BE16 and H14 of the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan 1998 which state that good design will be expected in all new extensions and that permission will only be given for development which would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area.
12. It would also conflict with Policy CS74 of the Sheffield Development Framework Core Strategy 2009 which expects high quality design which takes advantage of and enhances the distinctive heritage of the city. Finally, it would conflict with paragraphs 60 and 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which state that it is proper to reinforce local distinctiveness and that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
13. For the reasons above I have found that the proposal would be harmful to the conservation area. That harm would be less than substantial and in accordance with paragraph 134 of the Framework, it should be weighed against any public benefits of the proposal. I have, however, no evidence to suggest that the proposal would result in any public benefit that would outweigh the harm identified. Thus, the proposal would not accord with the provisions of paragraph 134 of the Framework.

Other Matters

14. I note that there have been no objections to the proposal from neighbouring residents and that the proposal would assist in utilising the dwelling as a family home rather than a rental property. However, such matters would not outweigh the great weight afforded to the failure of the proposal to conserve the significance of a designated heritage asset.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Jason Whitfield

INSPECTOR