



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 July 2019

by Sarah Manchester BSc MSc PhD MEnvSc

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/W4705/W/19/3222849

153 Jowett House, Sunbridge Road, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD1 2NU

- 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 H Hussain against the decision of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref 18/05050/FUL, dated 22 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 18 January 2019.
 - The development proposed is partial demolition of modern additions to the main mill building complex to support prior notification submission.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The proposal is for the demolition of various buildings and structures at the site including a shed and a warehouse to the rear and south west of Jowett House, a link bridge, a 1960s building that provided staff facilities, part single part 2 storey buildings to the north of the site, and the mill chimney. However, the Council's reason for refusal relates only to the proposed demolition of the mill chimney.
3. Therefore, the main issue is the effect of the proposed demolition of the mill chimney on the character or appearance of the Goitside Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The Goitside Conservation Area (the CA) is a densely built area dominated by industrial and commercial buildings, including former mills, indicative of its significant industrial heritage. The industrial buildings are dominant features of the area, being generally tall and bulky and resulting in a hard urban landscape and a sense of enclosure at street level. As a result of the density of similar sizes and styles of buildings and traditional building materials, the area has a distinctive and consistent character and appearance. The layout of buildings and streets allows views into and through the CA and further contributes to its sense of place and local character. Collectively, the traditional buildings and streetscapes contribute to the significance of the conservation area.
5. The appeal site is a complex of former mill and industrial buildings to the south of Sunbridge Road in the CA. The former mill chimney is a tall square tapering stone structure with iron straps and some evidence of weathering. Although it is located within the site, and surrounded by more modern buildings, it is nevertheless visible at both close range and from more distant locations through the CA and beyond. Together with the traditional former mill buildings

- that characterise the area, the chimney points to the industrial heritage of the CA and the district. It therefore makes a positive contribution to the significance of the CA. Moreover, while there are other historic chimneys nearby and in the wider area, the evidence before me indicates that such chimneys are now rare in the district as a whole and in the county.
6. The loss of traditional features, such as mill chimneys, are identified threats to the significance of the CA. The demolition of the chimney would therefore fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. However, the proposal is relatively modest in the context of the CA as a whole and consequently it would cause less than substantial harm to its significance as a designated heritage asset.
 7. Notwithstanding this, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 196 of the Framework states that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset, that harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals.
 8. The demolition is proposed to facilitate the creation of a communal external courtyard area as part of a proposed development of 89 self-contained student flats (application ref 18/05127/POR). Although the appropriate re-use of underused buildings and land within the CA would be a benefit, there is nothing before me to indicate that prior approval has either been, or would be likely to be, granted. However, I have been made aware that there is a consent at this site for the conversion of the mill building into 56 dwellings.
 9. On the basis of the evidence before me, I cannot be certain that the appeal scheme before me is necessary to secure the appropriate re-use of the site or that it would result in public benefits that would outweigh the harm to the CA. I therefore conclude that the appeal proposal would be in conflict with the Framework.
 10. As a result of the harm to the CA, the proposal would conflict with the development plan including Policy EN3 of the Bradford Core Strategy Development Plan Document Adopted July 2017. This requires, among other things, that development should conserve and where appropriate enhance Bradford's heritage assets, especially its industrial heritage relating to the textile industry including mills and chimneys, reinforcing the distinctive character of the area and taking account of Conservation Area guidance.
 11. There is little before me to demonstrate that the mill chimney could not be retained as part of alternative plans for the redevelopment of the site. While there is some evidence of stone weathering and historic repairs, no substantive evidence has been submitted with the appeal in the form of a structural survey or assessment to demonstrate that an inspection has been attempted or that the chimney is unsafe or otherwise unsuitable for retention.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above, the appeal should therefore be dismissed.

Sarah Manchester INSPECTOR