



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 July 2019

by G J Fort BA PGDip LLM MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/W4705/D/18/3218451

**Springs Farm, Enfield Side Road, Stanbury, Keighley, West Yorkshire
BD22 0EQ**

- 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 Miles Marsden against the decision of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref 18/02524/HOU, dated 4 June 2018, was refused by notice dated 24 September 2018.
 - The development proposed is described as "Install new steel 'I' beam over proposed aperture in accordance with calculation by structural engineer
Create new 3.6m opening in rear kitchen wall excavate and create footings & 6m x 2.5m floor slab for proposed extension. Erect grey slimline aluminium framed extension with glazed roof, walls & doors."
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council's decision on the application that led to this appeal pre-dated the publication of the latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). The Framework is a material consideration in decision-taking from the date of its issue¹, and I will therefore take it into account in my assessments of the planning merits of the appeal. As the elements of the Framework of most relevance to the appeal remained unchanged from the former to the current version no prejudice would occur to the interests of any parties as a result of me proceeding on this basis.

Main Issues

3. I consider the main issues in this case to be whether the proposed development would preserve its host Grade II Listed Building and any features of special interest that it possesses, and its effects on the character and appearance of its surroundings.

¹ Per paragraphs 2 and 212 of the Framework

Reasons

Special interest and significance

4. Although the current appeal is not accompanied by one seeking listed building consent, the proposed development relates to Springs Farm² a Grade II Listed Building. Consisting of a farmhouse and attached barn, the appeal building is faced in stone- including some larger coursed blocks and massive quoins- with the balance of solid to void elements in its elevations tipped considerably towards the solid. This aspect of the appeal building imparts a robust and rural appearance, from which its special interest and significance in architectural terms to some degree derives. In this way too the appeal building contributes to the rugged character of its undulating moorland surroundings wherein dry-stone walls, and stone-faced traditional domestic, agricultural and other buildings and features are inter-visible with but, in some cases, well separated from Springs Farm. Although the appellant makes the point about the relative significance of the front and rear elevations of the appeal building, the aspects I have described apply to all of its elevations.
5. I have taken careful note of the appellant's statement, including the appended photograph of the appeal building before rebuilding and renovation works had taken place, which show that extensive portions of the walls, roof-covering and other elements had failed. This material, taken together with my observations on-site, indicate that extensive elements of the structure and fabric of the building have been replaced as a result of former re-building work, which the appellant's statement suggests took place around some twenty years ago. However, these former works are faithfully and sensitively executed and have conserved the aspects of significance that I have described. The garage and small side extension, which appear to have been constructed around the same time as the re-building works are similarly sensitive in terms of their facing materials and the detailing of their elevations.

The proposed development

6. As described in the banner heading above, the proposed development would see the installation of an aluminium-framed glazed single-storey extension to the rear. The proposed development would entail the removal of walling and an existing window, to create a large structural opening which would give access to the extension.

The effect of the proposed development

7. Structural openings within the elevations of Springs Farm, with the exception of the large arched entrance to the barn, but particularly those housing windows are on the whole modestly-scaled, and this contributes to the robustly solid aesthetic of the building. The proposed development's introduction of a much larger structural opening would be readily discernible through the glazed extension, would be at variance with the solidity of the appeal building's established character and would undermine its aesthetic to the detriment of its special architectural interest. Although I accept that a proportion of the fabric that would be removed is not original, this does not serve to overcome the harmful effect of the appeal scheme in this regard.

² Referenced as "Farmhouse and attached barn on The Slack"

8. Moreover, the extensive glazing employed in the proposed extension would be in sharp contrast to the ruggedness of the existing building- and, particularly due to its reflective qualities, it would be a readily visible and eye-catching feature in viewpoints from Reservoir Road. In its immediate surroundings, the proposed extension would appear as an incongruous and overly urban feature at odds with the agrarian appearance of the appeal building and its rural surroundings.
9. Consequently, on the basis of these considerations, and having regard to the duty imposed by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, I conclude that the proposed development would fail to preserve the Listed Building and its special interest. Moreover, for the reasons given, the proposed development would appear as an incongruous feature, at odds with, and harmful to the character and appearance of its surroundings. For these reasons, the proposed development would conflict with Policies DS1 and EN3 of the Bradford Core Strategy (adopted July 2017), and Bradford's Householder Supplementary Planning Document (adopted April 2012). Amongst other things and taken together, the policies and guidance seek to ensure that house extensions should contribute to achieving high quality places, should respect architectural features and details of their original buildings; and conserve and where possible enhance the heritage significance and setting of heritage assets.
10. Whilst Policy DS3 is cited on the Decision Notice, this policy is directed to urban rather than rural character, and therefore is not directly relevant to the appeal proposal. Nevertheless, the lack of conflict with this policy is not a positive benefit of the appeal scheme.

Other Matters

11. The appellant supplied readings which demonstrate the low levels of natural light currently available in the room to which the proposed extension would be attached- and these findings accord with my on-site observations. I note also that the recorded light levels fall well below those recommended by the Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers. I readily accept that the proposed extension would increase the levels of natural light to this room. This would be a private benefit for the occupants of the property, however, and carries only limited weight in the overall planning balance. Moreover, it has not been established that the proposed development is required to ensure a continued use of the property consistent with its conservation. To my mind, it has not therefore been demonstrated that the proposed development would be necessary to secure the optimum viable use of the Listed Building.
12. Although I accept that the proposed development would be technically 'reversible', given the increase in space and light that it would result in there would be no strong likelihood of future occupiers of the appeal building wishing to deprive themselves of these benefits. Moreover, I have had regard to the Historic England³ advice drawn to my attention by the appellant which states that reversibility alone does not justify alteration. Consequently, the technical reversibility of the proposed development does not serve to mitigate the harm I have found to any material degree, or alter my conclusions on the main issues set out above.

³ *Making Changes to Heritage Assets* Historic England Advice Note 2

13. I accept that the proposal would have no adverse highway safety implications, and that it would not cause harmful effects to the residential amenity of the occupants of any nearby properties. Nevertheless, an absence of harm in these respects is a matter that weighs neither for nor against the appeal scheme.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

14. The Framework anticipates that once harm to the significance of a heritage asset has been found that the magnitude of that harm should be assessed. In the current case the proposed development would clearly cause less than substantial harm to the significance of its host building. Nevertheless, the Framework establishes⁴ that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets, such as listed buildings, irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to their significance. Furthermore, the harm is to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including where appropriate, securing an asset's optimum viable use⁵.
15. For the reasons set out above, the proposed development would not secure the optimum viable use of the Listed Building. Moreover, no public benefits have been advanced in favour of the appeal scheme sufficient to outweigh the great weight and considerable importance I accord to the harm it would cause to the significance of the Listed Building. Consequently, the proposed development would conflict with the Framework insofar as it seeks to ensure, amongst other things, that heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.
16. Moreover, no material considerations in this case are of a sufficient weight to justify a decision other than in accordance with the development plan, with which, in terms of the above-cited policies, the appeal scheme would clearly conflict.
17. Accordingly, for the reasons set out above, and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G J Fort

INSPECTOR

⁴ At paragraph 193

⁵ Per paragraph 196 of the Framework