
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 January 2020

by Jillian Rann BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/W/19/3239000

Three Millstones Inn, Waddington Road, West Bradford BB7 4SX

- 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 Matthew Frost against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 3/2019/0554, dated 14 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 27 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is new single storey building at the rear of the public house to create an additional guest bedroom.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description in the banner heading differs from that on the application form. However, it was changed by the Council in agreement with the appellant, and has been used by the appellant on the appeal form. Therefore, and as I am satisfied that it accurately describes the proposed development, and the application was publicised on that basis, I have adopted the amended description.
3. At the time of my visit, timber fencing had been installed along the sides of the walkway at the rear of the existing building. The submitted drawings indicate some fencing alongside the patio area to the rear of the proposed building. However, that fencing which I observed on site did not appear consistent with the fencing indicated on those submitted drawings, including with regard to its height or extent. For the avoidance of doubt, and notwithstanding any works carried out on site to date, I have considered the appeal, including any fencing, on the basis of the proposal as shown on the submitted drawings.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on
 - the setting of the Grade II listed Three Millstones Inn; and
 - the safety and convenience of highway users in the vicinity of the site.

Reasons

Setting of the listed building

5. The appeal site is located to the rear of the Three Millstones Inn, a Grade II listed public house with whitewashed rubble stone walls and a stone slate roof, located in the village of West Bradford. Its front elevation has a relatively formal appearance, with regularly-aligned doors and windows clearly defined within quite thick stone surrounds and in some cases, stone mullions. That front elevation sits adjacent to the road frontage, and forms a prominent component of the Waddington Road street scene.
6. The rear of the building is somewhat simpler in appearance, with more limited fenestration and smaller windows, and has been subject to extensions of various extensions over the years. Whilst less prominent from the road frontage, the rear elevation and parts of those existing extensions are nonetheless visible from the car park and rear parts of the site, and in public views from more distant vantage points further along Waddington Road and from parts of the public right of way which runs to the east and south of the site, and those more informal areas to the rear of the building also contribute to its significance.
7. Whilst varying in their height and depth, most of the building's existing side and rear extensions have mono-pitched or dual-pitched roofs similar in gradient to that of the original building, and are sensitive to it in their form and detailing, with simple elevations and fenestration, and in the use of stone in their construction, painted in parts to match the original building. They are also set down from the original building's roofline, with eaves below or level with those of the main building. Consequently, those sympathetic pitched roof side and rear extensions do not compete visually with the original public house building, but sit comfortably as subservient features, consistent with the simple appearance of the secondary areas to the rear of the building, and preserve its character and significance.
8. In contrast, as a result of its very shallow mono-pitched roof, which would slope upwards away from the rear of the original public house building for some significant depth, the proposed building would appear as a discordant feature, which would not reflect the appearance or the roof form or gradient of the listed building, or those sympathetically designed existing extensions, which either have gable-ends, or mono-pitched roofs sloping downwards away from the building. Furthermore, whilst lower than the listed building's roof ridge, the proposed building's eaves at their highest point would be higher than those of the adjacent part of the original building. As a result, it would not maintain a sense of subservience to the main listed building, and would appear as an unduly dominant feature which would detract from its setting.
9. Whilst the elevations of the recently-constructed, detached accommodation building in the rear part of the site include some large areas of glazing and sections of timber and metal cladding, those elevations are predominantly finished in stone which is similar in appearance to that used in the adjacent extensions at the rear of the listed building, and in the neighbouring building at Barnsteads Barn. Therefore, whilst those elements of glazing and other materials distinguish that more modern building from those older buildings

around it, it nonetheless also maintains a sense of consistency and continuity with the extended listed building, and sits comfortably within its setting.

10. In contrast, the elevations of the proposed building would be entirely timber clad, and its rear elevation would be fully glazed. It would also be located very close to the rear of the listed building. It would therefore be closely surrounded by, and viewed in the immediate context of, the whitewashed public house, its stone and whitewashed rear extensions, and the adjacent stone boundary wall. In that context, the exclusive use of timber along the building's expansive side elevation, on its own and together with the further expanse of timber fencing proposed beyond it and around its patio area, and the use of full height glazing to its rear elevation, would appear discordant, and would fail to maintain a sense of connection or continuity between the proposed building and the extended listed building. The use of the materials as proposed would therefore further contribute to the harm arising to the setting of the listed building.
11. The public house has a large, flat-roofed infill extension to the rear, which is not generally sympathetic to the original building in its form or detailing. However, the visibility of that single storey, ground floor projection in the context of the taller, more sympathetic extensions around it is very limited. In contrast, the proposed building would occupy a prominent position on an elevated area to the rear of the public house, and would extend some distance further to the rear than the building's existing two storey rear extension. Consequently, from those vantage points I have identified above, much of the building's discordant, long shallow roof form and expansive timber-clad side elevation, and parts of the timber fence extending beyond it, would be evident beyond the rear of that existing extension, and above the longer single storey pitched-roof rear extension closer to the car park. In any event, the presence of that flat-roofed extension, and of other smaller infill extensions and outbuildings to the rear of the public house, does not outweigh or justify the further harm that would arise as a result of the proposed building.
12. I am advised that records indicate that historic tenants of the listed building were also involved with farming. The building thus appears to have an historic functional connection with the fields to the rear. However, whilst the rear of the building has been subject to various extensions over the years, parts of its roof and original rear elevation remain visible above and around those extensions, including ground and first floor windows in the eastern part of its rear elevation, from which views remain possible towards those fields to the rear. In that context, I do not find that the location of the proposed building would result in the severing of the last remaining connection between the rear of the listed building and its wider historic context, or cause harm to its significance in that regard.
13. However, for the reasons given, I consider that the proposed building would appear as an unduly dominant and discordant feature, which would not be sympathetic to the character or appearance of the listed building, and would cause harm to its setting as a result.
14. As a result of the small scale of the development, the harm arising in this case would be less than substantial. Nevertheless, I must have regard to the significance of the listed building, and the Framework requires any such harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

15. The development would provide an additional unit of overnight accommodation, which would contribute to the income and operation of the public house. However, the contribution made by the single unit proposed, and thus the public benefits in that regard, would be limited, and would not outweigh the harm I have identified to the character, appearance and setting of the listed building, to which I attach considerable weight.
16. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the proposed development would cause harm to the setting of the Grade II Three Millstones Inn. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policies DME4 and DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy 2008-2028: A Local Plan for Ribble Valley (the Core Strategy). Amongst other things, those policies require development to be of a high standard of building design, sympathetic to existing land uses in terms of its scale, style and building features, and state that development proposals within the setting of listed buildings which cause harm to the significance of the heritage asset will not be supported.

Safety and convenience of highway users

17. The Council has expressed concerns that there is already a shortfall in parking provision within the site. However, the parking area available within the site appears to be the same as that which existed when the Council recently granted planning permission for 5 guest bedrooms within the existing public house building, in addition to the recently-built accommodation building in the rear part of the site.
18. I observed that on-street parking availability within the village appears to be quite limited. However, I have not been presented with substantive evidence to demonstrate that on-street parking arising from the appeal property has adversely affected the local highway network as a result of that permitted accommodation. The proposed building would not reduce the area available within the site for parking. Nor am I convinced that the single additional unit now proposed would have significant further implications with regard to the likelihood of overspill parking taking place on surrounding streets, compared with the accommodation already permitted on the site.
19. The Council's concerns regarding the width of the access from the site onto Waddington Road appear to have been raised at the time the detached accommodation building in the rear of the site was permitted and, I am advised, there was a condition on that permission requiring the access to be narrowed. It therefore appears that the Council could pursue enforcement action to address those concerns raised in the event that condition has not been complied with. In any event, since the evidence before me does not suggest that circumstances have changed materially in the intervening period, and as the single unit of accommodation now proposed would not materially increase the number of vehicle movements into or out of that access, I consider that the matter could be satisfactorily addressed by means of a similar condition were I to grant permission in this case.
20. Therefore, for the reasons given, and on the basis of the evidence before me, I conclude that the proposed development would not have an adverse effect on the safety or convenience of highway users in the vicinity of the site. The proposal would therefore not conflict with Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy which, amongst other things, requires development to ensure safe access can

be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale of traffic likely to be generated and to consider potential car parking implications.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

21. I conclude that the development would not have adverse implications for the safety or convenience of highway users. However, the absence of harm in that regard does not outweigh the harm to the setting of the listed building which I have identified, to which I attach considerable weight, and which would not be outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme.
22. Therefore, for the reasons given and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Jillian Rann

INSPECTOR