



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 June 2020

by Anne Jordan BA (Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 23rd June 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/M9496/Y/20/3246680

The Road Bridge over the River Dane, Danebridge, Wincle, Macclesfield, Cheshire

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Alan Weeks against the decision of Peak District National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref NP/CEC/0619/0612, dated 10 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 14 August 2019.
 - The works proposed are installation of a commemorative plaque to the bridge parapet at Danesbridge.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted for installation of a commemorative plaque to the bridge parapet at Danesbridge in accordance with application Ref NP/CEC/0619/0612, dated 10 June 2019 and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The works authorised by this consent shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this consent.
 - 2) The works hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan, Plan ref DC1.2/KZ/NONE Plaque for the bridge at Danebridge and DC1.2/KZ/None View of east parapet facing east) submitted 13th June 2019.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve the Grade II listed Dane Bridge and any special architectural or other interest that it possesses, and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Danebridge and Wincle Conservation Area.

Procedural Matter

3. I have been provided with 2 designs for the plaque. As the council have confirmed that they determined the appeal on the basis of Plan Ref DC1.2/KZ/None I have also determined the appeal on that basis.

Reasons

4. S16(2) and S66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 require special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving a

listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. S72(1) of the Act requires special attention to be had to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that area. Policy L3 of the Peak District National Park Core Strategy and Policy DMC7 of the Development Management Policies 2019 reflect the statutory duty set out in the Act.

5. The bridge at Danebridge was constructed in 1869, replacing an earlier structure on site which dated from the 17th century. It is constructed in reddish gritstone with a single arch. Ashlar parapets lie at either side at road level. The most striking views of the bridge are available when the bridge is viewed in profile, where the span of the arch is viewed in the context of the verdant landscape. The significance of the asset lies primarily in the contribution it makes to the attractive rural landscape. The bridge also lies within the Danebridge and Wincle Conservation Area.
6. The works would comprise the erection of a bronze plaque measuring around 440mm wide and 300mm deep at the centre of the eastern parapet of the bridge. It would be mounted on the smooth stonework which forms the roadside walls to the bridge. Due to its size and position and the muted appearance of the bronze material the plaque would be an unobtrusive feature and so would not detract from the simple appearance of the structure when viewed from road level. Neither would the proposal impact on the wider views of the asset or how it is appreciated in the landscape.
7. I take into account concerns regarding the method of fixing and the potential for damage to the stonework behind. The stonework is smooth and has weathered uniformly over time. It is not finely tooled, or ornate, and a plaque would not obscure any particular features in the stonework. The fixing would require 2 holes to be drilled into the Ashlar stonework. Given the size of the plaque these would be likely to be relatively small. Although the holes would be visible in time after the plaque was removed, provided the works were carried out competently, I have no reason to consider that the method of fixing would significantly damage the stonework, or that the holes would cause visual harm.
8. The plaque is intended to commemorate the age of the structure and draw attention to its local status as a link between Staffordshire and Cheshire. I accept the Planning Authority's view, that the structure itself is not particularly old, and that information on the geographical significance of the asset could be provided by alternative means. However, as I have found that the proposal would have a broadly neutral effect on the asset, these matters do not weigh against the proposal. Furthermore, I have no evidence to suggest that the proposal would lead to a proliferation of other similar works, which together would be detrimental to the wider character of the National Park, and in any case, future proposals would be considered in relation to their own merits or otherwise.
9. Although not a reason for refusal the Planning Authority also expressed concerns in relation to highway safety. I noted on site that the bridge was relatively narrow in width, and that the angle and gradient of approach from both directions meant that traffic travelled across the bridge at a reduced speed. I also noted that it would be immediately apparent to any approaching traffic if pedestrians viewing the plaque were standing in the middle of the

bridge. Given the modest nature of the plaque I consider it unlikely that groups of pedestrians would congregate in this manner for any length of time. However, even if they did, local road conditions indicate that this is unlikely to be detrimental to highway safety.

10. I therefore conclude that the works would not harm the significance of the listed bridge or the Danebridge and Wincle Conservation Area and I find no conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which seeks to preserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. Of the policies put to me by the Council I consider policies GSP3 and L3 of the Peak District National Park Core Strategy and Policy DMC7 of the Development Management Policies 2019, to be most relevant. Together, amongst other things, these seek to protect, conserve and enhance the setting of heritage assets and so have similar aims to the Framework.
11. Accordingly, having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is allowed. I have considered whether any conditions are necessary in light of the advice in Planning Practice Guidance. Conditions relating to approved plans and the period of implementation are reasonable and necessary to ensure the works are carried out as proposed.

Anne Jordan

INSPECTOR