



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 June 2020

by C Coyne BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 June 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/J4423/W/20/3245314

331 & 331A Baslow Road, Totley, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S17 4AD

- 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 Miss Kate Cavan against the decision of Sheffield City Council.
 - The application Ref 19/02706/FUL, dated 21 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 29 October 2019.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as 'Application to regularise walls to rear that form enclosure and dormer window to rear. New external stair to access first floor flat' (sic).
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. When on my site visit, I observed that construction of the rear dormer window and boundary walls had already been completed and that what appeared to be a temporary external wooden staircase had been installed to the rear of the property. Notwithstanding these being in place, I have considered the appeal based on the plans submitted to and considered by the Council, which form the basis of the scheme that is before me. This is in the interests of impartiality and fairness in accordance with the principles of natural justice.
3. The Council have described the development as '*Retention of a rear dormer window and rear boundary walls, and application to erect rear external stairs to first floor flat*'. I note that the appellant has also utilised this description on their appeal form. I consider that the Council's revised description provides a succinct and accurate description of the proposal and I have therefore determined the appeal on the basis of the revised description.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Totley Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a two-storey end of terrace building comprising two residential apartments situated within the Totley Conservation Area (CA). It has a traditional stone façade with its roof tiles consisting of traditional slate. It is linked to a row of two-storey terraced dwellings that are slightly lower in height. They also have more modern roof tiles with their façades being

- rendered. The host property is also adjacent to another row of two storey terraced residential properties that are of a similar style and design to it. None of these other terraced properties have a box-dormer window, walled enclosure or external staircase to the rear.
6. The surrounding CA is predominately residential with many of the properties being detached dwellings some of which have a more traditional style with a finish comprising traditional materials such as original slate rooftiles and stone façades, none of these have box dormer windows. The appeal property, its neighbouring properties and several other buildings close to them are also identified as being buildings of townscape merit within the CA plan.
 7. The proposal relates to the installation of a rear dormer window, an external balcony and staircase to the rear (providing access to the first floor flat) and rear walls at ground floor level with a height of approximately 2 metres that would form two partial enclosures. One of these partial enclosures would screen the lower portion of the proposed external staircase and project approximately 3 metres past the rear building line of the host property. The proposed balcony/staircase would also project past the rear building line of the appeal property but not quite as far as the proposed enclosure walls.
 8. I note that the proposal has been constructed of materials that are partially sympathetic to the character of the CA (the Westmorland roof slate and timber windows), and that it would be primarily viewed from Totley Hall Lane. However, given that none of the other neighbouring terraced properties have a rear dormer window, a protruding external rear staircase or rear enclosure walls projecting past their established building lines, I find that the proposal represents a discordant addition to the street scene thereby having an adverse visual impact, nonetheless.
 9. Accordingly, given the design, size and location of the proposal it fails to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. As a result, it has a negative effect on the significance of a designated heritage asset resulting in less than substantial harm to the CA. Having regard to paragraph 196 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (the Framework) I have little evidence before me to demonstrate that any public benefits arising from the proposed development exist in this case to justify this harm.
 10. I note the appellant's points that other larger properties in the area have been converted into apartments and that the proposed dormer window creates headroom, light and ventilation in the first floor flat making it more habitable than it would otherwise have been. However, this does not outweigh the harm to the designated heritage asset which I have identified above and to which I must attach great weight.
 11. I therefore conclude that the proposal would conflict with Policies BE5, BE16, BE17, BE18, and H14 of the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan (adopted March 1998), Policy CS74 of the Sheffield Core Strategy (adopted March 2009), and Guidelines 1, 2 and 3 of the Designing House Extensions Supplementary Planning Guidance, which, amongst other things, seek to promote good design and ensure that development proposals preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Conservation Areas. It would also conflict with paragraphs 193, 194 and 196 of the Framework which seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment, and Paragraph 130 which promotes good design.

Conclusion

12. The proposed development fails to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA in conflict with the aims of the Framework. It would therefore be contrary to the adopted development plan and there are no material considerations indicating a decision otherwise in accordance with it. Consequently, and for the reasons set out above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Coyne

INSPECTOR