



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 June 2020

by Conor Rafferty LLB (Hons), AIEMA, Solicitor

Decision by Chris Preston BA(Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/D/20/3246503

3 Loneslack, Chatburn Old Road, Chatburn, BB7 4AB

- 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 David Thornber against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 3/2019/0622, dated 9 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as 'replacement of existing roof, external windows and doors and provision of insulating and cladding to the exterior of the building'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Background and Main Issue

3. The Council raised no objection to the replacement of the existing roof or the external windows. Having viewed those elements I see no reason to take a different view, having regard to the minor impact those changes would have on the external character of the building.
4. Therefore, the main issue is the effect of the external timber cladding on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site comprises a detached residential property located along the southern side of Old Road in Chatburn in a predominantly residential area on the western edge of the village. The historic core of the village, as encompassed by the Chatburn Conservation Area, is made up predominantly of stone built properties, with occasional use of render or stone wash and a mixture of stone slate and blue slate roofs.
6. The appeal site is located just outside the Conservation Area and when travelling westwards the dwelling is the first in a distinct set of four properties with a high level of coherence in terms of design and materials. Due to the sloping nature of the road, each subsequent dwelling sits in a slightly more

elevated position, allowing the consistency of the front elevations to be experienced and appreciated.

7. There is little evidence of any substantial alteration to this group of dwellings and the original, cohesively planned, character clearly remains evident. Whilst of more modern appearance than the historic core of the village the original 1970s style of the properties is retained and the consistency in appearance and materials enhances the character of the row of properties which clearly read as a distinct group from a particular period in time. Although the properties do not replicate the vernacular style they are, nonetheless, an attractive addition to the village.
8. The proposal would involve the installation of cladding to the front, side and rear elevations of the appeal property. While the silhouette, form and massing of the building would not be affected by this proposal, such cladding would represent the first addition of its kind along this row of properties and as a result the pleasing coherence that currently exists along the front elevations would be lost. Views of the proposal would be particularly prominent when travelling westwards due to extensive use of cladding, the wide, open driveway and the sloping nature of the road. Here it would be experienced alongside the remaining properties in this group, highlighting the incongruous nature of the cladding.
9. As part of the proposal the doors at the appeal property would also be replaced. From the plans submitted this would involve the replacement of the white metal garage door and timber door along the front elevation of the property with a timber garage door with pass door, and a timber front door with glazed side panel. These alterations would serve to further distinguish the property from the neighbouring dwellings, resulting in the appeal property appearing out of place within this group and failing to relate to the surrounding area in this regard.
10. I recognise that timber cladding is often found on properties of similar style dating from the 1970s but the coherence of the group of dwellings as they step up the hillside is a key feature as described above and the sheer extent of cladding proposed, covering the entire three storeys of the bottom half of the property, would be substantially at odds with the established theme. It would give the main façade a monolithic appearance, in contrast current arrangement where render and artificial stone are used to break up the mass of the tall front section.
11. I also note that paragraph 127(c) of the Framework states that decisions should ensure that proposals are sympathetic to local character whilst not discouraging innovation or change. Additions can make a positive contribution without matching or replicating existing materials; the way in which the four properties provide an attractive addition to the village is an example of that. However, in this instance, the coherent use of materials is an essential part of the carefully planned character of the group. The proposed changes would fail to reflect the carefully planned arrangement and the attractive and cohesive group value would be substantially diminished.
12. For all of those reasons I find that the development would have a significantly adverse visual effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Accordingly, it would fail to comply with Policies DMG1 and DMH5 of the

Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley Adoption Version.

Other considerations

13. Reference has been made to other examples of similar development in the surrounding area. While consistency in decision making is an important consideration, I must also consider the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area with regard to the adopted development plan. I have considered this appeal on its own site-specific circumstances and, in view of the degree of harm I have identified, the reference to other development nearby does not outweigh this.
14. The appellant has listed certain benefits of the proposal, including the fact that it would improve the thermal performance of the dwelling, improve the architectural value of the property and utilise sustainable materials in the form of timber. However, there is nothing to suggest that similar benefits couldn't be achieved in a manner that would better reflect the established character of the group. Accordingly, while these benefits are acknowledged, they do not attract sufficient weight in planning terms to override the harm that would arise.

Conclusion and Recommendation

15. Having had regard to all matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Rafferty

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

16. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report, and, on that basis, I agree that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Preston

INSPECTOR