
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 October 2020

by Diane Cragg DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/J4423/W/20/3255182
37 & 39 Crookes Road, Sheffield S10 5BA

- 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 Andrew Woodhouse against the decision of Sheffield City Council.
 - The application Ref 18/01049/FUL, dated 28 September 2018, was refused by notice dated 8 January 2020
 - The development proposed is replacement of entrance doors and surrounds.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. At my site visit I saw that replacement entrance doors and surrounds have been installed. The details on drawing no. B1823-01 submitted as part of the planning application proposed amendments to the development that has been implemented. I have taken into consideration the details shown on the drawing and made my decision based on these.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Broomhill Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal properties are within character area 3 and identified as buildings of merit in the Broomhill Conservation Area Appraisal (CA appraisal). The significance of the character area is in part derived from its good examples of 19th century housing. The appraisal acknowledges that loss of original building materials and details have a negative effect on the area's characteristics.
5. Crookes Road is characterised mainly by a mix of terraced and semi-detached, stone and brick built, Victorian dwellings. Although there is some uniformity to the alignment of the buildings and their scale, they also exhibit a variety of period detailing. Since October 2009 an article 4 direction has been in place which, amongst other things, withdraws the right to make alterations to the elevation of properties that front a highway without planning permission, including at the appeal site.
6. I have not been provided with any evidence of the former doors or surrounds. However, the appellant has provided photographs indicating that the door

surrounds were similar to those on the adjacent properties at Nos 33 and 35 Crookes Road. The appellant also confirms that the doors and frames were wooden and in a poor state of repair.

7. The wooden door surrounds by comparison with the adjacent similar surrounds appear bulky and poorly detailed. The proposed addition of plinths and mouldings as shown on the drawings would provide some improvement to the design but would not change their overall proportions. The depth and width of the pilasters, and the lack of refinement to the detail of these, dominates rather than defines the door entrances and appear incongruous in the street scene.
8. The modern composite materials of the doors and the thickness and flat profile of the Upvc frames has resulted in proportions and detailing that do not match the subtle profile and detailing that can be achieved with wooden doors and frames. The fan lights above the doors are narrow and the width of the doors appear reduced when viewed with the replacement door surrounds.
9. Although I have no doubt that the former doors needed repair or replacement, the replacement doors, frames and surrounds, fail to respect the character or appearance of the property. I consider that they represent poor design. Although there is some short-term benefit to the replacement of doors that are in a poor state of repair, accepting poor replicas of the original doors, in both design and materials, detracts from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
10. I acknowledge that there are many houses, probably the majority, that have replacement doors. Many have little relevance to the period or detail of the property. Some doors are wood but most fail to achieve a standard that respects the character or detailing of the building within which they are set.
11. Nevertheless, I have no evidence about whether the other changes pre-date the 2009 article 4 Direction and I must consider this proposal with regard to its own particular circumstances and merits. The existence of other doors, that fail to respect the character of the building or the wider area, does not represent a good reason for accepting inappropriate design, particularly when the design in its own right detracts from the character and appearance of the property and the street scene.
12. The Conservation Area is a designated heritage asset as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework). In accordance with Paragraph 193 of the Framework the finding of harm to a designated heritage asset is a matter to which I must attach considerable importance and great weight. Given the scale of the proposed development, I quantify this harm as less than substantial. Where a development would lead to less than substantial harm, in accordance with Paragraph 196 of the Framework, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
13. I accept that the previous doors and surrounds were in a poor state of repair and there is a limited public benefit in ensuring that dwellings are secure and habitable. This limited public benefit, which could equally be achieved with more appropriate detailed design, would not outweigh or justify the harm I have identified.

14. I therefore conclude that the development would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Broomhill Conservation Area and would conflict with Policies BE15, BE16 and BE17 of the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan and Policy CS74 of the Sheffield Core Strategy. Collectively these policies seek to ensure that development preserves or enhances Sheffield's heritage and a high standard of design. It would also conflict with the aims of the article 4 direction in force in the Broomhill Conservation Area and the Framework where it seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment.

Other matters

15. The appellants have also referred to the Council's processing of the application and a lack of substantive communication. Whilst I agree that this is unfortunate, in my determination of this appeal I must have regard only to the planning merits of the case.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

Diane Cragg

INSPECTOR