

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 May 2021

by Mrs H Nicholls FdA MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/P1133/W/21/3268410

**Bishopsteignton Methodist Church, 41 Fore Street, Bishopsteignton
TQ14 9QR**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Eddy Stephenson against Teignbridge District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00552/FUL, is dated 25 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is extension and refurbishment of existing toilet facilities to allow for the provision of 1 No wheelchair disabled facility plus 1 No ambulant facility plus small storage area.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for extension and refurbishment of existing toilet facilities to allow for the provision of 1 No wheelchair disabled facility plus 1 No ambulant facility plus small storage area at Bishopsteignton Methodist Church, 41 Fore Street, Bishopsteignton, TQ14 9QR, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/00552/FUL, dated 25 March 2020, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr Eddy Stephenson against Teignbridge District Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Bishopsteignton Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. Bishopsteignton Methodist Church occupies a prominent, elevated position above Fore Street, central to the Bishopsteignton Conservation Area (CA). The building is a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA), imposing in scale and design and is characterised by roughly coursed stone volcanic tuff walls with cream brick detailing. Given that the building is within the CA, I am required under Section 72(1) of the Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act (1990), to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) also requires a balanced judgement in regard to NDHAs, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance.

5. The special qualities of the CA derive from its origins as a historic linear settlement along the principal streets of Shute Hill and Fore Street which later expanded to include a range of C19 houses and villas. It retains a wealth of historic buildings. Its layout, including gardens, is integral to its character and the combination of vernacular buildings and those with urban-inspired architecture lend to the CA's special qualities. Specific to the appeal, Bishopsteignton Methodist Church is identified in the Bishopsteignton Conservation Area Character Appraisal (BCACA) as making an outstanding contribution to the CA. It is also built from local red volcanic tuff which is a locally distinctive material scarcely found anywhere else.
6. The appeal proposal would remove approximately 6 metres of the external rear wall of the church to allow for a modest extension of approximately 1 metre in depth to the rear. The extension would have a flat roof to achieve watertightness and to link into the existing lean-to roof, without interfering with the stained glass window. It would have a slim external wall construction to provide the required internal dimensions whilst maintaining separation from the retaining wall and bank to the rear.
7. The proposal would be very modest in scale and tucked to the rear of the building, where public access is limited owing to the steeply sided retaining bank. The building is currently freestanding and whilst the gap between it and the retaining bank would be decreased, it would not be adjoined thereto. The prominence of the building would not be diminished, and the limited scale of the extension would not be perceived in general views of the building from its immediate surroundings. The loss of the small extent of original fabric and three brick feature windows, whilst noted, would not undermine the overall character of the NDHA, which would otherwise retain all other notable features on the more publicly visible sides and front elevation.
8. Whilst the BCACA sets out that stained timber and plastic weatherboarding should generally be avoided in the CA, the appellant has indicated a willingness to use an alternative finish on the external walls to assimilate better with the building. A render coloured panel to tie in with the brick quoin detailing would seem most suitable, but any such finish can be agreed by way of planning condition.
9. Drawing this issue together, the overall character and appearance of the NDHA would be preserved. Similarly, given the diminutive scale of the proposal relative to the CA and its siting away from generally accessible public views of the building, the proposal would have a neutral effect on the character and the appearance of the CA, and thus would preserve its significance.
10. In view of this main issue, the proposal would not harm the character or appearance of the host building and would preserve the significance of Bishopsteignton Conservation Area. It therefore complies with, in particular, Policies S2 and EN5 of the Teignbridge Local Plan (2014). These Policies collectively seek to protect and enhance the area's heritage and secure development of a high quality design. For similar reasons, the proposal would also comply with Policy BSC3 of the Bishopsteignton Neighbourhood Development Plan (2017) which seeks to ensure all development within, or affecting the setting of, the CA must preserve and enhance its special architectural, environmental and historic character as set out in the Bishopsteignton Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

Conditions

11. In addition to the statutory time limit, a condition is necessary specifying the approved plans in the interests of certainty.
12. In the interests of the character and appearance of the area, details, including samples, of materials to be used in the construction of the extension shall be submitted by condition.

Conclusion

13. The proposal complies with the development plan, when read as a whole. There are no other considerations to indicate that a decision should be taken other than in accordance therewith.
14. Consequently, the appeal is allowed.

Hollie Nicholls

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - Location Plan, Ref 200223/AL(PL)100, dated 16 March 2020
 - Block Plan, Ref 200223/AL(PL)101A, dated 16 March 2020
 - Proposed Plans, Ref 200223/AL(PL)104, dated 17 March 2020
 - Proposed Elevations, Ref 200223/AL(PL)105, dated 17 March 2020
- 3) Prior to the relevant parts of the works being undertaken, details of the following aspects of the proposal shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
 - a) details of external wall material or cladding (sample), including colour/finish;
 - b) fascia (manufacturers specification or sample);
 - c) rainwater goods (manufacturers specification or sample); and
 - d) section through 'eaves' demonstrating relationship between any cladding (if relevant), fascia, guttering and single ply membrane roof material (including any coping if proposed).

Works shall proceed and be retained in accordance with the approved details.