



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 25 May 2021

by L Fleming BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 June 2021

Appeal A - Ref: APP/P1940/W/20/3263971

72 High Street, Rickmansworth, WD3 1AJ

- 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 Unifruit Limited against the decision of Three Rivers District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/0611/FUL, dated 12 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 28 May 2020.
 - The development proposed is construction of detached single storey garage and store at rear of 72 High Street with new vehicular access to serve garage.
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Appeal B - Ref: APP/P1940/Y/20/3263975

72 High Street, Rickmansworth, WD3 1AJ

- 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 Unifruit Limited against the decision of Three Rivers District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/0659/LBC, dated 25 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 28 May 2020.
 - The works proposed are construction of detached single storey garage and store at rear of 72 High Street with new vehicular access to serve garage.
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Decisions

Appeal A - Ref: APP/P1940/W/20/3263971

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for construction of detached single storey garage and store at rear of 72 High Street with new vehicular access to serve garage at 72 High Street, Rickmansworth, WD3 1AJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/0611/FUL, dated 12 March 2020, subject to the conditions set out in the schedule attached to this decision.

Appeal B - Ref: APP/P1940/Y/20/3263975

2. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted for the construction of detached single storey garage and store at rear of 72 High Street with new vehicular access to serve garage at 72 High Street, Rickmansworth, WD3 1AJ in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 20/0659/LBC dated 25 March 2020, subject to the conditions set out in the schedule attached to this decision.

Procedural Matters

3. Both appeals relate to the same scheme under different but complimentary legislation, I have therefore dealt with them together in my reasoning except where indicated otherwise.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in both appeals is whether the proposed development/works would preserve the grade II listed 72, 72A and 72B, High Street or its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses, whether the scheme would preserve the setting of the grade II listed No 74 High Street and whether the scheme would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Rickmansworth Conservation Area.

Significance

5. The appeal property is a grade II listed building (No 72 High Street) which fronts Rickmansworth High Street. It has a rear hardstanding accessed from Northway and is within the Rickmansworth Conservation Area (CA). The proposed building would be next to a traditional workshop building which forms part of the grade II listed No 74 High Street.
6. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) requires special regard to be given to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting and any features of architectural or historic interest it possesses. The same act also requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. Furthermore, paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that when considering the impact of new development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
7. No 72 High Street is C17, timber-framed two storey with attic. It was re-fronted in C18 and has C19 and C20 alterations including shop window bays and a continuous projecting cornice. It has exposed timber framing and its traditional roof construction is intact. No 74 High Street is a C20 three storey shop and offices constructed of plum brick with a plain tiled roof. It has a traditional shop front and some original shop fittings and its ground floor adjoins an earlier brick outhouse which has a blocked-up arch. The CA covers a large part of the town and includes a variety of historic buildings, some of medieval origin. The CA encompasses the towns commercial centre which extends along High Street and adjoining residential areas including Victorian terraced housing.
8. Insofar as is relevant to these appeals the significance of No 72 High street derives from its historical use and architectural interest as a timber framed High Street building and its associated architectural detailing and positioning. The significance of No 74 derives from its use and detailing as a commercial building within the CA and town centre. The significance of the CA is founded on the architectural detailing and layout of the buildings and spaces within it.

Effects on No 72 High Street, No 74 High Street and Rickmansworth Conservation Area

9. In considering a scheme proposing a two storey dwelling in a similar location as the proposal before me an Inspector in 2019¹ found that the back of the properties which front High Street represent a publicly visible boundary to the CA, and any new development should respect what remains of the historic character. Furthermore, that scheme was found to have an entirely domestic appearance and overall that proposal was not considered of sufficient quality to justify its distinctly different character or prominence.
10. The proposal before me is for a modest single storey garage and store. It would have a simple double pitched roof, reflecting roofs of the traditional buildings nearby and through its subservient scale, positioning and simple detailing would appear as an ancillary building to No 72 High Street alongside other ancillary buildings on Northway.
11. The plans show a small section of brick wall adjacent to the road would be removed, this only has the effect of partially enclosing the yard and the proposed building would have the same effect. The wall to be removed is modern brickwork, subject to a method statement and any necessary making good of its juncture with the outbuilding of No 74 High Street after it's demolition, I am satisfied that there would be no harm to the historic fabric of either of the listed buildings.
12. Views of No 72 High Street and No 74 High Street would be retained above the proposed low roof and through the access. The proposed building would be set off the boundary with No 74 High Street and set back from the highway behind landscaping. It would also have a lower eaves and ridge height than the adjacent outbuilding of No 74 High Street.
13. Therefore, overall, I find the modest single storey traditional ancillary form of the proposed building would not look out of place in the service yard to the rear of No 72 High Street and next to the outbuilding of No 74 High Street. Consequently, there would be no harm to the setting or significance of the of the grade II listed No 72 High Street or the grade II listed No 74 High Street and the character and appearance of the CA would be preserved.
14. For the same reasons the proposals would accord with the development plan, particularly Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Three Rivers District Core Strategy (2011) and Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Three Rivers District Development Management Policies Local Development Document (2013) which amongst other things seek to ensure good design and that proposals do not cause harm to designated heritage assets.

Conditions

15. The conditions imposed for both appeals are those which have been suggested by the Council, adjusted in the interests of precision in accordance with the advice on imposing conditions in the Planning Practice Guidance. In addition to the standard timescale conditions, I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawings as this provides certainty.

¹ Appeal Reference APP/P1940/W/18/3218244

16. I recognise yellow stock bricks and slate have been specified on the plans. However, materials matching those of the grade II listed No 72 High Street should be agreed with the Council. I have therefore also imposed conditions which require samples and details of materials to be submitted for approval in the interests of preserving the character or appearance of the CA and the setting of the listed buildings.
17. Finally, to ensure the removal of the modern brick wall attached to the outbuilding of the grade II listed No 74 High Street is achieved sensitively I have imposed a condition on the decision relating to Appeal B which requires a method statement to be agreed and implemented within 12 months of the proposal being brought into use. This is necessary in the interests of preserving the listed buildings and their settings and the character and appearance of the CA.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that both appeals should be allowed.

L Fleming

INSPECTOR

Appeal A - SCHEDULE

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1748/30 A, 1748/31 A and 1748/32
- 3) Before any building operations above ground level hereby permitted are commenced, samples and details of the proposed external materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and no external materials shall be used other than those approved.

Appeal B - SCHEDULE

- 1) The works authorised by this consent shall be begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
- 2) Before any building operations above ground level hereby consented are commenced, samples and details of the proposed external materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and no external materials shall be used other than those approved.
- 3) Prior to the removal of the brick wall fronting Northway which adjoins No 74 High Street, a method statement for its removal and any making good if necessary, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The removal of that brick wall shall only be undertaken in accordance with the approved method statement and shall be completed in full within 12 months of the approved works being brought into to use.

END