
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 March 2022

by T J Burnham BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/N4720/D/21/3284934

85 Bachelor Lane, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 5NF

- 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 Ms H Gray against the decision of Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref 21/04850/FU, dated 28 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 1 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is replacement of existing pitched roof with new flat roof and build up wall to v/s of new flat roof.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of the proposal has changed from the application form to the decision notice. The decision notice references the proposal as 'replacement of existing pitched roof with flat roof and partial vertical extension of outer side wall'. This description is clearer than that on the application form, which appears to have been amended and I have determined the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Horsforth Conservation Area (the Conservation Area).

Reasons

4. This part of the Conservation Area comprises largely of traditional stone-built 19th century, often residential buildings of established and attractive appearance, generally incorporating pitched roofs. The form, scale, materials and detailing of these buildings are defining features of its character and appearance.
5. The use of flat roofs on properties is not common, with traditionally pitched roofs being favoured. The current, in the main, pitched roof serves to limit the bulk of the side addition at the property and appears to be well established and of some age.
6. The addition of a flat roof, regardless of the roofing material, while building up the outer wall to match, would add significant bulk to the side addition which would be visible from Bachelor Lane and would introduce an uncharacteristic roof form into the area.

7. The proposal would also increase the height of the side wall, well above the heads of the windows on the side elevation which would leave them somewhat marooned well beneath the newly created eaves line. This would afford the elevation an unbalanced appearance.
8. Further, the proposal would result in the loss of the two rearmost parapet walls, which are characterful features which contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area, echoing, as they do, the extensive and attractive stone capped walls which form the common front boundary treatment in this part of the Conservation Area.
9. The changes proposed would therefore detract from the appearance of the property. Subsequently, they would detract from the heritage significance of the Conservation Area which lies in part with the form, scale, materials and detailing of the buildings.
10. The harm to the significance of the Conservation Area would be less than substantial. Paragraph 196 of the Framework¹ requires such harm to be weighed against any public benefits of the proposal.
11. The benefits of the proposal are likely to be limited to improved living space at the appeal property. However, the benefits that the proposal would offer are not clear and, in any event, the benefit of improved space would primarily be a personal one for the appellant. Given the degree of harm I have found that would arise from the appeal scheme and the statutory protection afforded to Conservation Areas, such benefit is not sufficient to outweigh this harm.
12. The proposal would fail to accord with Policies P10 and P11 of the Leeds Core Strategy (2019) (CS) and saved Policies GP5, BD6 and N19 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review (2006). Amongst other things, these policies require proposals of good design, where the historic environment, including historic buildings and townscapes will be conserved and enhanced.
13. The proposal would also conflict with SPD guidance² which at HDG1 requires that all extensions, additions and alterations should respect the scale, form, proportions, character and appearance of the main dwelling and the locality.

Conclusion

14. There is nothing to indicate that the decision should be made otherwise than in accordance with the development plan and I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

TJ Burnham

INSPECTOR

¹ National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

² Leeds City Council Householder Design Guide Leeds Local Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document April 2012.