



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 September 2022

by H Jones BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 October 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/E2734/W/22/3300716

Flat 7, Richmond Court, Union Street, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG1 1BW

- 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 Rob Taylor against the decision of Harrogate Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00563/FUL, dated 12 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 24 March 2022.
 - The development proposed is replacement of existing roof to form an extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Harrogate Conservation Area (CA) and whether it would preserve the settings of listed buildings near the site.

Reasons

3. Flat 7 Richmond Court is contained within a mid-terraced property which fronts onto Parliament Street and backs onto Union Street within the CA. The property is constructed of local stone with a slate roof and exhibits ornate and traditional architectural detailing. The property has previously been extended to the rear and it steps down in height to Union Street. These extensions conceal some of the more historic elements of the building and only a section of the historic pitched roof is visible from Union Street. The front of the property appears principally three storeys in height though accommodation is within a fourth storey attic. These building materials, approach to architectural detailing and the height of the property are very reflective of Harrogate town centre and, in turn, contribute to the character and appearance of the CA and its significance.
4. The host property, and an adjoining terraced property, have a consistent design approach to several frontage features including the windows, eaves detail and slate covered roof slope. The similarity in the appearance of the properties contributes positively to the appearance of Parliament Street. The host property, and group of properties either side, each have slate covered roofs which step down with the topography, which is also a distinctive feature of the street.
5. The Grade II listed Royal Baths building is opposite the site. Toward the corner of Parliament Street and Kings Road are a group of Grade II listed buildings

comprising of 58 Parliament Street and 2 and 4 Kings Road, 54 and 56 Parliament Street, and 50 and 52 Parliament Street. In the opposite direction is the Grade II listed Westminster Arcade building.

6. The Westminster Arcade building, and the Royal Baths, are each large, landmark buildings. I find that their architectural and artistic interest contributes considerably to their significance as does their historic interest providing evidence of the history of shopping and leisure activities. The Royal Baths includes prominent design features such as a leaded dome and is sited on a corner plot with streets addressed by extensive façades. The Westminster Arcade building is Gothically styled. It has a central tower with spire of considerable height which allows it to be seen at distance. Given that the appearance of the buildings can be so readily appreciated on approaches to them, I find that the visual settings of these buildings contribute meaningfully to their significance.
7. The remaining listed buildings referenced above, on the corner of Parliament Street and Kings Road, also include ornate and distinguishing design features and their architecture appears important to the significance of each building. These buildings play less of a landmark role in the CA than the Westminster Arcade and Royal Baths buildings but, nevertheless, their visual settings contribute to their significance. These settings are in part derived from the historic town centre terraced streets which they form a part of and are close by.
8. The mansard roof design proposed would result in the loss of the historic slate covered pitched roof and disrupt the cascading roofscape of Parliament Street. The metal cladding proposed would introduce a material incongruous with the roofscape of the existing property and those that adjoin. The three windows proposed to the front would have a differentiation between their proportions and a vertical emphasis at odds with existing windows in the host property and the similar property that adjoins. The positive cohesive appearance exhibited by the host property and that which adjoins would be eroded by the proposal and instead a discordance between the properties would be created. With much of the historic property already concealed in views from Union Street, the loss of the existing roof slope would be harmful to the host building, removing an element of legibility of the traditional parts of the property.
9. There is intervisibility between the host property and each of the listed buildings referenced above in the vicinity of Ripon Road/A61, Montpellier Road and Crescent Gardens. For the above reasons, the proposed development would be an unsympathetic addition to the roofscape of the property and this part of Parliament Street. In turn, and in these views, a harmful discord between the development and the architecture which contributes to the significance of those listed buildings and how they are experienced would result.
10. Mansard roofs are relatively common within the CA, and I accept that they contribute positively to the appearance of some other buildings. However, it does not follow that the particular design in this case, or its consequential effects, are appropriate in this context. Variance in architectural form and materiality does exist on Union Street but this is not a strong influence over the prevailing character of the area and does not justify the particular approach in this case. An extension to the roof of a building at Crescent Gardens may have

been recently approved but I have little detail before me on that development or how it may be of particular relevance to this case. As a result, I give little weight to this in my Decision.

11. The proposed development would therefore be harmful to the host property and surrounding area. It would fail to either preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA and fail to preserve the settings of listed buildings. The harm to each of the designated heritage assets would be less than substantial. Irrespective, and having regard to the statutory duties in Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, this harm would be a matter of considerable importance and weight.
12. The development may improve living space within the flat and this improvement would be of some public benefit by making a contribution to the provision of a form of housing to meet the needs of present and future occupiers. However, such a benefit would be modest and I have no substantive evidence before me that the current living space is deficient or unsuitable. Therefore, and having regard to paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework, I have no substantive evidence before me that there would be any public benefits derived from the development that would outweigh the less than substantial harm to heritage assets.
13. Consequently, the development would be contrary to Policies HP2, HP3 and HS8 of the Harrogate District Local Plan 2014-2035 (March 2020). The development would conflict with advice within the House Extensions and Garages Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, 2005 and the Heritage Management Guidance Supplementary Planning Document, 2014. In summary, and amongst other things, these policies and guidance seek to ensure that development is of high quality, that it results in no adverse effects upon character or appearance and that it protects or enhances heritage assets including their setting.

Other Matters

14. The development may not affect the commercial occupancy of the ground floor of the host property, however, this lack of harm is neutral in the planning balance and does not outweigh the harms I have identified in respect of the main issues.

Conclusion

15. For the above reasons, having taken account of the development plan as a whole and all other relevant material considerations, the appeal is dismissed.

H Jones

INSPECTOR