



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 October 2022

by E Worthington BA (Hons) MTP MUED MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3rd November 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/A4710/D/22/3303265

4 Clough Cottages, Blackshaw Clough Road, Soyland, Calderdale, Sowerby Bridge, HX6 4NL

- 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 N Wallace against the decision of Calderdale Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00382/HSE, dated 24 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 29 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is a porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. Since the proposal relates to a listed building, I have had special regard to section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).
3. There is no listed building consent appeal before me and as a consequence this appeal relates only to the planning merits of the case. It does not consider any works which would require listed building consent, but not planning permission.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve the grade II listed building at Clough House Cottages, Clough House Farmhouse (Ref: 1278238) and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

The listed building

5. The appeal property is a cottage which forms part of a listed building formerly known as Clough Farm. This dates to the late 16th century with alterations made in 1743 and the mid 19th century when the cottage was added. The building is constructed in hammer dressed stone with a stone slate roof over two storeys with an attic storey, and now forms six separate dwellings.
 6. Despite the alterations and extensions that have taken place including its division into several units, the building as a whole retains an attractive rural appearance as a large and impressive traditional farmhouse with distinctive
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architectural features and proportions. Thus its historic form and function is still clearly legible and the building retains its rural charm.

7. From the evidence before me I therefore find that the significance of the listed building, insofar as relating to this appeal, is primarily associated with its simple traditional rural design and proportions as well as its architectural character and use of traditional materials.

The effect of the proposal

8. The appeal proposal seeks the construction of a porch to No 4's front door. It would be traditionally built in stone and would replace an existing timber door canopy there. The porch would be relatively modest in size and has been designed to ensure that its openings would be proportional to the areas of stone walling, and the header to the door entrance would be aligned. I also accept that it would be appreciated as a later addition to the building.
9. As a 19th century extension to the building, No 4 appears plainer in design than the adjacent older properties. The windows and door openings are surrounded in square cut stone and are not chamfered as is the case in the older parts of the building. Nevertheless, No 4 forms part of the listed building and is an important component of what is appreciated as the building's extensive and principal south facing elevation.
10. I appreciate that the existing canopy would be removed and that this would be a benefit of the proposal. However, its replacement with the porch as proposed would see the introduction of a much larger and more substantial feature to the front of No 4. Despite its relatively limited size the porch would be sited prominently on the building's south facing elevation. Whilst the building line there is staggered, there are no other porches to the other properties. As such, the listed building's southern elevation as a whole retains its simple unadorned yet characterful appearance commensurate with its historic role as a long established and traditional farmhouse.
11. Taking all these factors into account, I consider that the proposal would be an incongruous and dominant addition that would be appreciated as an unwelcome interruption to the building's attractive and uncomplicated south facing elevation. Thus it would conflict with the simple traditional rural design and proportions and distinctive architectural character of the listed building. As a result, the proposal would impair the building's historic legibility and fail to preserve its special interest.
12. The proposal would not be highly visible or prominent in public views. However, these factors do not affect my conclusions. Listed buildings are safeguarded for their inherent architectural and historic interest irrespective of whether or not public views of the building can be gained.
13. Whilst I have seen nothing to suggest that the proposal would necessarily lead to the construction of other porches on the adjacent properties, this is not a reason to allow development that would in itself be harmful.
14. I therefore conclude on the main issue that the proposal would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building. I give this harm considerable importance and weight in the balance of this appeal.

15. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises at paragraph 199 that when considering the impact of a proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 200 of the Framework goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of those assets or from development within their setting and that this should have a clear and convincing justification. I consider that the harm to the listed building in this case would be less than substantial, but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.
16. Paragraph 202 of the Framework requires that less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
17. Whilst the proposal would provide additional weather protection for the occupiers of the appeal property, these are private benefits only. However I also appreciate that the porch would protect the entrance door and surround from inclement weather and help to protect the historic fabric of the building. This would be a public benefit of the proposal.
18. However, I find that this public benefit would be insufficient to outweigh the harm to the designated heritage asset that I have identified. For these reasons the proposed works would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and paragraph 197 of the Framework.
19. The proposal would also be contrary to Policy BE14 of the Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan (UDP) which advises that proposals involving any alteration or extension of a listed building will only be permitted where it does not have an adverse effect on the architectural and historic character of the building. It would also conflict with UDP Policy BE1 concerning design which requires development to respect or enhance the established character and appearance of existing buildings and the surroundings (i).

Other matters

20. The appeal building is within the Green Belt. Although the Council raises no objections to the proposal in this regard, since I am dismissing the appeal in relation to the main issue it has not been necessary for me to consider this matter further.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all the other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

E Worthington

INSPECTOR