



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 December 2022

by K Williams MTCP (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/W/22/3304318

Pimlico House Gisburn Road Gisburn Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 4ES

- 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 Anne Walsh against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 3/2022/0144, dated 8 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 21 March 2022.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a random stone dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Although the Council's decision notice and the appeal form uses a slightly different address and application description, I have used the address and application description provided on the original planning application form as there is no evidence any change to these was agreed.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area; and
 - The effect of the proposed development on the settings of the Gisburn Conservation Area (CA) and the Grade II listed buildings 'Pimlico House', 'Barn adjoining to east of Pimlico House' (Pimlico Barn), '1 Park Road' and 'The Dower House'.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site is located within the village of Gisburn, it is formed from hardstanding to the rear of a range of buildings attached to the listed Pimlico House and Pimlico Barn. It is a previously developed open vacant site, which appears to have formerly been part of a coach depot. It is accessed from Mill Lane, which also serves the auction mart opposite. The site also has boundaries with residential properties on Stable Close and is in proximity to a small retail use.

5. Whilst there is a varied mix of buildings and roofscapes in the area, these maintain a traditional and cohesive appearance in terms of proportions and roof pitch. In contrast the appeal proposal would have a relatively wide frontage compared to the adjacent residential buildings, and its depth would also be longer. Although it would have a similar height to surrounding buildings the additional depth would result in an anomalously wide gable and shallow roof pitch. Notwithstanding the intention for the gable and roof pitch to mirror nearby properties, their appearance would not reflect those steeper traditional gables in the area, and the proposed dwelling would appear unusually wide and squat. In addition, the drawings, which are scaled, show the roof would also have large overhanging eaves to the sides. These would be an alien feature for a residential property in comparison to the surrounding built context against which the proposed building would be seen. In addition, the proposal would be highly visible in the area from Main Street and Mill Lane, and the appearance of the gable which would be most prominent in views could not be mitigated.
6. Whilst I acknowledge some of the features on the proposed dwelling reflect the dwellings on Stable Close, such as the fenestration, the overall composition of all the elements which make up the external appearance of the proposal, such as the width and position of the windows, would not result in a locally distinctive or cohesive design. Although suitable materials can be conditioned this would not overcome the overall proportions and expansive gable. The fact the site is not within the CA or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty does not lessen the harmful effect the proposal would have on the character and appearance of the area.
7. On this issue I conclude the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, the proposal is contrary the Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 (Core Strategy) Policy DMG1. This seeks to ensure new development is sympathetic to its surroundings in terms of scale, massing, style and features.

Heritage assets

8. Although the focus of the Council's concern is the design of the development, it also considers there would be harmful impacts upon views which would affect the setting of the CA, and nearby listed buildings. I have had regard to the statutory duty under section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The CA boundary runs along the rear to the building range adjoining Pimlico House, and the Pimlico Barn and roughly follows the boundaries of these listed buildings.
9. The significance of the CA, insofar as is relevant to this appeal includes the setting of the buildings along with its attractive mix of 17th, 18th and 19th century buildings. The homogeneity of the materials stone wall and roofs, and simple vernacular style add to the architectural quality of the buildings, which is also reflected in the wider surrounding development of the village. The significance of the listed buildings includes their positive contribution to CA, their architectural quality and also the historic development of the village and its agricultural character. In addition, the range of buildings attached to Pimlico House continues to the west, and the Council advise they consider the range appears to make a positive contribution.

10. I find that the appeal site does not interfere with the listed 1 Park Row and the Dower House, due to the presence of later intervening development on Stable Close, and intervisibility between sites is reduced.
11. I am mindful of the surrounding back-land type uses of garages and outbuildings, and that Pimlico House and Pimlico Barn are already physically disaggregated from the site by fencing. The limited evidence also appears to show the site has an historic separate relationship due to the use of the site as a coach depot. However, the appeal site contributes positively to the setting of both the CA and listed buildings at Pimlico House and Pimlico Barn insofar as it now provides an open aspect to the rear of these buildings.
12. The proposed development would be seen in some views to and from Pimlico House and Pimlico Barn. In the context of the appeal, Pimlico House and Barn are prominent from Main Street and from the rear there are extensive views of this range of buildings from Mill Lane. This is a very public and prominent site in proximity to the auction mart.
13. I have already concluded that there would be harm to the character and appearance of the area. For the same reasons there would be harm to the CA and the setting of the Grade II listed buildings by virtue of the inappropriate design, and intrusion into the views of the CA and listed buildings whose boundaries are almost contiguous with each other.
14. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the proposed development, would harm the significance of the CA. Similarly, I conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the setting of nearby listed buildings at Pimlico House and Pimlico Barn.
15. Although the harm caused to the CA, Pimlico House and Pimlico Barn would be less than substantial, it is nevertheless afforded great weight. Under such circumstances, paragraph 202 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing the asset's optimum viable use.
16. The proposed development would provide public benefits, in terms of a modest contribution to the supply of housing and development of a currently vacant parcel of previously developed land, in a location with easy access to local services. However, these benefits would be limited and would not outweigh the harm to the designated heritage assets.
17. As such, the proposed development would conflict with Core Strategy Policy Key Statement EN5 and Policy DME4 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. These seek to conserve and enhance heritage assets and seek to protect views affecting the setting of the CA and the setting of listed buildings.

Other Matters

18. Whilst I have noted the conditions suggested by the Council, these would not overcome the harm caused by the overall form of the building. Nor would conditions which would address the discrepancies between the plans. I have not been provided with any example of other development which may have been approved, as such I cannot give any weight to these setting a precedent.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons given above, having considered the development plan as a whole, and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

K Williams

INSPECTOR