



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 January 2023

by Helen Hockenhull BA (Hons) B.PI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/A2335/D/22/3308998

Sheepfold, Borwick Road, Borwick, CARNFORTH, LA6 1JS

- 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 & Mrs MacKay against the decision of Lancaster City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00764/FUL, dated 19 June 2022, was refused by notice dated 11 August 2022.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The name of the appeal property is stated as two words 'Sheep Fold' in the Council's Decision Notice but is one word in the appellant's documentation. I also observed on site that the house name was a single word. I have therefore referred to the property as 'Sheepfold' in my decision.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this case are whether the proposal conserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Borwick Conservation Area (CA) and the effect of the proposal on the setting of the Grade II listed Beck House.

Reasons

4. Sheepfold forms a two-storey stone-built dwelling located at the south eastern end of Borwick village. I understand that the property is a former agricultural building associated with the listed Beck House to the east. Beck House used to incorporate a series of agricultural buildings before the farm was broken up into smaller landholdings in the 1980s. The site lies in the Borwick Conservation Area.
5. I have a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area, and to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of Listed Buildings. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that they should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance (paragraph 184). It goes on to advise that any harm or loss requires clear and convincing justification (paragraph 194), and that any harm that is less than substantial must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (paragraph 196).

6. There are essentially two areas of concern raised by the Council in the reasons for refusal. Firstly, the use of a charred timber material and secondly the loss of part of the stone wall that runs along the driveway leading to the rear of Beck House.
7. Borwick Conservation Area encompasses the village and is characterised by stone built post medieval buildings dating from the 17th to 19th century many of which signify an agricultural past. The CA's significance lies in its well-preserved character and its agricultural history.
8. Beck House forms an early 19th century two storey farmhouse constructed in rendered rubble with a slate roof. It is a symmetrical building with gable stacks and chamfered quoins. Windows are double sashes with glazing bars set in stone surrounds. The rear wing has 17th century rebated and chamfered window surrounds and includes a blocked doorway with a lintel stating the date 1681. Its significance lies in its architectural and aesthetic value.
9. The appeal scheme proposes a single storey side extension. The extension occupies part of the area to the side of the property and measures approximately 2 metres to the front elevation and around 4.5 metres to the rear with a depth of approximately 5.2 metres. The extension is modest in scale with a flat roof. I note that planning permission has been granted for a very similar scheme but using different materials and retaining the boundary wall. This established the principle of an extension in this location.
10. A contemporary design has been adopted with contrasting materials to the main house. A glazed link is proposed where the extension abuts the original dwelling to enable the historic carthorse opening on the side elevation to be revealed. A doorway opening is proposed with charred timber cladding concealing a window above the door. The side elevation is proposed to be constructed in stone and includes a single horizontal window. Charred timber is also proposed to the rear elevation to provide a surround to a full height combined window and door opening.
11. Turning to the issue of the setting of the adjacent Beck House, the setting of a heritage asset is defined in the glossary to the Framework as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Whilst I acknowledge that Sheepfold formed part of the original farm and therefore contributes to the setting of Beck House, this relationship has to an extent been diminished by the subdivision. When viewing the listed building from Borwick Road, the extension would be seen in the same view as the heritage asset. However, the development due to its siting and scale would appear as a modest secondary addition.
12. The glazed infill proposed between the existing dwelling and the extension provides a transition between the original and the new elements of the building. The charred timber in my view does not form an inappropriate material having regard to the rural village setting. It also reflects the former agricultural use of the site. From this perspective, the proposal would not impact negatively on the setting of Beck House.
13. The rear elevation of the proposed extension would not be seen from Borwick Road but would be visible in private views from the rear of Beck House. Looking towards the rear of Sheepfold, the upper part of the glazing and the charred wood surround would be visible above the remaining boundary wall.

The charred wood would introduce a new material which would form a contemporary solution providing a clear distinction between the existing building and the addition. It would be set to the side of the view of the heritage asset and would play a relatively small part in appreciating the building's setting. Overall, I consider that the setting of the heritage asset would be conserved.

14. The scheme also includes the removal of a modern stone wall to the side boundary to permit access for construction. It is proposed that the side elevation of the extension would in effect replace this boundary feature with a small section of wall being rebuilt re using the removed stone. I acknowledge that the side wall of the extension would maintain a physical boundary to the driveway in the same way as the side elevation to the outbuilding further up the drive. However, the wall also has a functional relationship to the two pillars at the entrance to the driveway and is important in denoting the driveway to Beck House and defining the curtilage of Sheepfold. I consider that the removal of the stone wall would fail to conserve the setting of the listed building and would cause harm to the character and appearance of the CA.
15. Having regard to the scale and nature of the harm, I consider it to be less than substantial. Therefore, in line with paragraph 196 of the Framework this harm must be weighed against the public benefit of the proposal. The appellant has not brought my attention to any such benefits. It is evident that the appeal scheme would provide additional ground floor living space for the appellant and his family. This would be a private benefit only. Given the above I find that the harm of the proposal would not be outweighed by the public benefits.
16. In conclusion, I have found that the character and appearance of the Borwick Conservation Area would not be conserved, and that the proposal would not preserve the setting of the nearby Listed Building. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policies DM29, DM37 and DM38 of the Local Plan for Lancaster District 2011-2031 Part Two Review of the Development Management Development Plan Document (the DPD), which together seek to ensure that development proposals preserve or where appropriate enhance the character, appearance and setting of heritage assets. For the same reasons the development would not comply with the requirements of section 16 of the Framework which seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment.

Other Matters

17. I am advised that the boundary wall along the driveway forms a shared boundary and is subject to a party wall agreement. As I am dismissing this appeal, I do not need to comment on this further.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I dismiss this appeal.

Helen Hockenhull

INSPECTOR