



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 July 2023

by D Cleary MTCP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/J4423/D/23/3318676

70 Riverdale Road, Sheffield S10 3FD

- 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 Jonathan Coulthard against the decision of Sheffield City Council.
 - The application Ref: 22/03675/FUL, dated 06 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 21 December 2022.
 - The development is described as the partial demolition (<115 cubic metres), additions, alterations and extensions with associated landscaping
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for Costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr Jonathan Coulthard against Sheffield City Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Procedural Matters

3. The description of development in the banner above has been taken from the planning application form. However, in Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed but, nevertheless, a different wording has been entered. Neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the one given on the original application which I consider to be sufficiently accurate.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Ranmoor Conservation Area (RCA).

Reasons

5. The Ranmoor Conservation Area Statement of Special Interest summaries that *"Ranmoor's special architectural and historic interest is principally derived from its significance as the city's foremost Victorian residential suburb. The high quality of buildings and townscape in Ranmoor expresses the considerable wealth of its early residents, who moved here in search of clean air and space. The suburb is historically associated with some of Sheffield's greatest industrialists, such as Mark Firth. Ranmoor is therefore a lasting legacy of the heyday of the city's steel industry, during the late 19th and early 20th*

century". Insofar as is relevant to this appeal I find the significance of the RCA is founded on the variety of traditional architectural detailing and its verdant character.

6. The appeal relates to a two-storey detached dwelling of T-shaped footprint with steeply pitched gable roof. The dwelling is sited close to Riverdale Road, behind a tall stone wall, and close to the junction with Oakbrook Road. The majority of other properties on this side of the road are set further back behind landscaped frontages. The siting of the dwelling is prominent on the approach up Oakbrook Road, with the dwelling creating a focal point along this vista. The dwelling is on the edge of the RCA and when entering the RCA from the east, along Riverdale Road, the roadside position of the dwelling is viewed in the context of established vegetation both on and off site. Within the site there are considerable land level changes.
7. The appeal dwelling has been extended previously with a flat roof two-storey extension. Nonetheless, I find that the architectural design and features of the dwelling, along with its verdant setting, contribute positively towards the character and appearance of the RCA.
8. The appeal proposals are for substantial extensions and alterations to the dwelling, comprising a mix of two and three storey additions, and a subterranean outbuilding. The design approach to the extension is for a more contemporary design compared to the existing dwelling and includes a mixed palette of materials and variety of design approaches. While such an approach may not be objectionable in isolation, the dwelling is in a sensitive location and forms part of the existing views into the RCA from Oakbrook Road and Riverdale Road.
9. From Riverdale Road, the extension would project above the boundary wall and the large depth of the extension would be apparent, and would obscure much of the eastern gable elevation of the dwelling. The flat roof form, glazed balustrade and the design and alignment of windows would markedly contrast with the simple appearance of the host dwelling, resulting in a development which would visually compete with the parent property. Similarly, from the vista into the RCA from Oakbrook Road, the design of the extensions, including link, would appear at odds with the host dwelling and would be seen to visually compete with the host dwelling, unacceptably drawing attention to its incongruity.
10. From within the site the three-storey element would utilise the change in land levels and, from Riverdale Road, the extension would appear as a two-storey addition while the retained boundary wall is of sufficient height to screen the lower level. Notwithstanding this, the size and extent of the extension is such that it would visually dominate the modest and unassuming scale of the existing property. There may also be glimpsed views of the three storey scale from Riverdale Drive, and some nearby private spaces, albeit through the mature landscaping.
11. The scheme proposes the loss of two silver birch trees adjacent to the side elevation. While the Council do not appear to have concern with the loss of these trees in arboricultural terms, the effect of their removal would be to expose the appeal site, making the dwelling even more prominent within the

streetscene. This would compound the effects of the proposed development that I have identified.

12. For the above reasons, I consider that the proposed development would be a negative intervention to this modest, yet prominent building, and in turn the proposal fails to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the RCA harming its significance.
13. Therefore, the proposals are contrary to Policies BE5, BE15, BE16 and H14(a) of the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan (1998) (the DP), Policy CS74 of the Sheffield Development Framework Core Strategy (2009), and paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (the Framework). Together, these require, amongst other things, that development be of good design and that regard be had to preserving and enhancing heritage assets. I acknowledge that the DP was adopted prior to the publication of the Framework and, as such, there is no requirement within the wording of the policies to weigh the harm against the public benefits of the scheme. Nonetheless, the requirement to preserve or enhance the Conservation Areas is consistent with the Framework and as such are still relevant in this regard. Furthermore, I do not find Policy H14(a) to be out of date as it requires extensions to be well designed, which is consistent with the requirements of the Framework.
14. I do not find the development to be contrary to Guidelines 1 and 2 of the adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance for Designing House Extensions, as it is made clear at paragraph 3.2 that the advice does not relate to proposals within Conservation Areas, where stricter control is applied.
15. The impact of the proposal would be relatively localised and the harm to the RCA identified above would be less than substantial. The Framework makes clear in paragraph 202 that where a proposed development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal and I return to this in the overall planning balance.

Other Matters

16. It is understood that the Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. However, the scheme does not result in a net increase in dwellings and, as such, I can afford this matter only very limited weight.
17. I acknowledge that the development would secure a longer term use of the appeal site as a single dwelling. In turn, I also acknowledge that the building is a non-designated heritage asset and the works would continue the use of the asset. However, I have no evidence that the dwelling is not fit for purpose as existing and, in any event, I am not persuaded that the appeal proposals are the only means for securing a longer term use of the building. This is a benefit to which I can attach limited weight.
18. It is acknowledged that the proposed scheme would result in the removal of unsympathetic later additions. However, as I have identified above this would be replaced by the proposed extensions which I have found to be harmful to the building and the RCA. So this matter carries neutral weight in the balance.
19. It has been advanced that there are fall back positions, including extensions which could be carried out under permitted development rights, the

replacement of the dwelling and/or the construction of an infill dwelling to sit beside the property. With regard to the replacement dwelling or a new infill dwelling, while such development could be acceptable in principle, I do not have any detail of what could be achieved and the effect of such works on the character and appearance of the RCA, or whether the loss of the existing property would be acceptable. In addition there are other constraints relating to trees, and a brook running through the site, which could affect the acceptability of any such proposal. Therefore, this is a matter I can only afford very limited weight.

20. In terms of an extension utilising permitted development (PD) rights, I am not persuaded that the indicative PD scheme would be more harmful than the appeal proposals. I have no evidence that such works have been established to as being PD through the grant of a Lawful Development Certificate. Therefore, again, I can only afford this matter very limited weight.

Planning Balance and Conclusions

21. I have identified that the proposed development would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the RCA. The preservation of heritage assets are matters to which I am required to attach considerable importance and great weight. I have identified that the scheme would deliver public benefits through continued use of a dwelling and improvements to the existing housing stock. However, these benefits, neither individually or cumulatively, would be sufficient to outweigh the great weight to be attached to the harm to the heritage asset I have identified.
22. I have had regard to the appellants view that the relevant policies, insofar as they relate to the appeal are out of date, and that the tilted balance should be engaged. However, I have found the relevant policies not to be out-of-date and, in any event, I have found the policies of the Framework that protect heritage assets provide a clear reason for refusing the development¹.
23. For the above reasons, the proposed development conflicts with the development plan and with the provisions of the Framework in relation to heritage assets, and there are no material considerations, which indicate that a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

D Cleary

INSPECTOR

¹ Paragraph 11 d) i) of the Framework