



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 October 2023

by Paul Cooper MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 October 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/M9496/D/23/3324116

The Old Chapel, Heathcote, Hartington, Derbyshire SK17 0AY

- 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 Steve Stoffell against the decision of Peak District National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref NP/DDD/0922/1164, dated 13 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 26 April 2023.
 - The development proposed is extensions and alterations to existing dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and the local area.

Reasons

3. 'The Old Chapel' is a detached dwelling situated in the hamlet of Heathcote. According to the evidence submitted, the dwelling was converted from a Wesleyan Methodist Chapel which dates from the mid-19th Century.
4. The appeal proposal seeks to add an extension to the existing side extension, to form additional living accommodation. It would project forward of what is effectively the front elevation of the dwelling.
5. The building is not listed or within a conservation area, although the Council has identified the building as a non-designated heritage asset. The Council identifies the heritage significance of the building as arising from its architectural and social interest.
6. The conversion of the former Methodist Chapel into a dwelling has largely retained its essential character. The simple form, with its large arched windows, is constructed of rubble limestone with gritstone quoins and the simple architectural design of the chapel still evidences the original use of the building and are part of its significance and character as a non-designated heritage asset.
7. From the evidence provided, the religious use ceased in the early 20th Century. The building was extended at a later date and used in conjunction with an agricultural use until the 1980s. It was then granted permission to be converted to residential use in 1993.

8. Despite the existing extension, which has diluted the ecclesiastical character of the original building to an extent, the appeal building remains clearly legible as a former Chapel. It is also located within an Area of Natural Beauty.
9. The extent and form of original detailing, the prominence of the building, and its contribution to the appreciation of the social history of the area contribute to its importance as a non-designated heritage asset. Although religious buildings of this design and scale are relatively common and many have been converted, I conclude that the appeal site is of moderate local heritage significance.
10. The proposal would be a sizeable projection to the main elevation. The scale and mass of the new built form would combine to give the appearance of an overly large addition. The visually strong projection would jar with the simple proportions of the main dwelling.
11. I find that due to its unsympathetic design and appearance, the proposal would lead to significant harm to the character and appearance of the building and the streetscape.
12. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host building and the local area. It therefore conflicts with policies GSP1, GSP2 and GSP3 of the Peak District National Park Local Development Framework (2011) and policies DMC3, DMC5 and DMH7 of the Development Management Policies : Part 2 of the Local Plan for the Peak District National Park (2019), which collectively, amongst other matters, expect development to respect the character of the area, respect conserve and enhance characteristics of the site and buildings or detract from the character and appearance of the original building.
13. It is also at odds with the National Planning Policy Framework, which states that development should be sympathetic to local character and add to the overall quality of the area.

Conclusion

14. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and there are no other considerations that outweigh this conflict. For the reasons outlined above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Paul Cooper

INSPECTOR