



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 February 2024

by **Andrew McCormack BSc (Hons) MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5 March 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/N4720/D/23/3331256

2 Brooklyn Street, Armley, Leeds LS12 2BU

- 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 Irfan Iqbal against the decision of Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref 23/02961/FU, dated 28 April 2023, was refused by notice dated 28 July 2023.
 - The development proposed is new render finish to existing dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. For clarity, I have used the postcode of the appeal property, as displayed in the banner heading for this Decision Letter and identified in the Council's Delegated Officer Report. Noting that different postcodes had been stated on the application form and the Council's Report, I have checked and confirmed that the postcode stated above is correct. The postcode set out on the application form relates to adjacent land to the south of Hall Lane.
3. It is noted that a previous planning application ref: 22/06771/FU relating to similar proposed works to the appeal property was refused by the Council. It is also noted that the Council has stated that issues relating to the reason for refusal for that previous application have not been resolved in this proposal. As such, the Council issued its refusal. Nonetheless, and in any event, I confirm that I have determined this appeal solely on the merits and circumstances of the proposal and case before me.
4. On 19 December 2023, the Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and I have therefore determined this appeal in accordance with that most recently revised document. However, in my assessment, the revised Framework results in no substantive changes to any relevant policy relating to this appeal.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the appeal property and its surrounding area.

Reasons

6. The proposal relates to a large end-terraced Victorian dwelling with hipped roof and elevations facing Brooklyn Street, Hall Lane and Brooklyn Place. Garden areas to all three sides of the property exist and, as I understand it, are usually enclosed by a low timber panel fence. However, at the time of my visit, the fencing was largely removed. There are two large stone bay windows to the Hall Lane elevation and a number of architectural features including stone heads with brick arched detailing to the first-floor windows. The doorway and windows on the Brooklyn Street elevation also have arched detailing. The

windows facing Brooklyn Street have stone sills with a horizontal brick band in line with each at both ground and first floor level. This feature is also evident at first floor level on the Hall Lane elevation. The Brooklyn Place elevation comprises a doorway at ground floor level and several smaller windows at ground and first floor. These also have stone sills and heads. The property has lost its original chimney stacks but the slate roof remains in place.

7. The surrounding area is predominantly residential and comprises a mix of Victorian back-to-back and through terraced housing to the north and west. To the east, on the opposite side of Brooklyn Place, inter-war semi-detached housing is present and to the south there is a cluster of older buildings with some more modern infill development. An area of public open space lies to the southwest. The property is in a prominent position and is visible from much of this part of Hall Lane as well as from the public open space and beyond it at Strawberry Lane.
8. Saved policy GP5 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and policy P10 of the Leeds Core Strategy (as amended 2019) emphasise the importance of detailing and materials in development. Furthermore, policy BD6 of the UDP states that all alterations should respect the form, detailing and materials of the original building.
9. The appeal property is an attractive Victorian brick dwelling with original external features such as the arched window heads and raised string courses that would be permanently obscured by a covering of render. Such details are important and are associated with the historically significant higher status of the dwelling than its surrounding 'back-to-back' properties. It is noted that some of these nearby properties have been painted, rather than rendered. Nonetheless, the external brick pattern and detailing remain visible through the paintwork. This would not be the case with the render coating applied to the property that is the subject of this appeal.
10. The appellant states that the property's design features and detailing would not be rendered over and as a result would be highlighted. However, in my assessment, such an approach would result in the contextual loss visually of the original brickwork of the property due to the proposed rendering. This would be harmful to its visual character and would cause harm to its appearance and significance as a building of higher status historically in the local area.
11. The building occupies a visually prominent position on Hall Lane and it is noted that this position marks the eastern edge of the older nineteenth century terraced streets – the Victorian settlement of Armley – before the transition to the less densely built inter-war housing to the east. Whilst many of these inter-war properties on the east side of Brooklyn Place are rendered, I find this to be a common and sometimes original feature of properties of this period. As such, this does not result in the visually harmful impact on those properties or their surrounding environment that the proposed rendering would have on the appeal property. Furthermore, the proposal would have an adverse impact on views of the property from the public open space to the southwest and beyond in more distant views from Strawberry Lane. This would be detrimental to the original character and appearance of the property and the surrounding area.
12. There is little or no additional information or justification provided by the appellant to support the proposed development. From what I have seen, the main points put forward are that the appeal property is not within a conservation area and there are several nearby properties which have been rendered. I have had regard to the photographs provided by the appellant and observed these other properties on site. The appellant also says that the main reason the walls are sought to be rendered is because of the discolouration of the bricks and the brittleness of the brickwork. Moreover, it is intended to give the property a more contemporary and fresh appearance.
13. The fact that the property is not situated within a conservation area does not, in and of itself, mean that the proposal should be granted planning permission. It is acknowledged

several nearby properties have been rendered. However, the appeal property must be considered on its own merits and circumstances. Accordingly, due to the prominent location of the property and the significance historically of its detailing and design in the context of the adjacent Victorian dwellings, I find that the impact of the proposed rendering would significantly diminish the character and appearance of the property which distinguishes it from the other properties.

14. I have had regard to the appellant's points relating to the appearance and condition of the brickwork which has led to the proposed rendering. Based on the evidence, it is unclear how the rendering of the property would satisfactorily address the discolouration of the brickwork or improve its physical condition. Whilst the appearance of the building would be altered, it is not clearly demonstrated how the present condition of the building would be maintained or improved by the proposal. As such, and in any event, the benefits of the proposal put forward by the appellant do not outweigh the significant harm I have identified.
15. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would have a detrimental effect, resulting in significant visual harm to the character and appearance of the appeal property and to the surrounding area. As a result, it is contrary to saved UDP policies GP5 and BD6, policy P10 of the Leeds Core Strategy (as amended 2019) and relevant policies set out within the Framework.

Conclusion

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

Andrew McCormack

Inspector