



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 February 2024

by M Ollerenshaw BSc (Hons) MTPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13th March 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/J4423/D/23/3330188

Manor Cottages, Common Lane, Ringinglow, Sheffield S11 7TG

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Henry Walker against the decision of Sheffield City Council.
 - The application Ref is 22/02716/FUL.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as 'extending roof over north side to form additional habitable rooms and alterations to the exterior. Additionally forming link roadway from existing driveway to south side.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council only raised objections to the proposed extension and alterations to the roof of the appeal property and not to the proposed driveway. I agree with this approach and I have limited my assessment to the planning merits, or otherwise, of this element alone.
3. The appeal site lies within the Green Belt. The Council has not found the proposal to be inappropriate development within the Green Belt. I have no reason to disagree with this assessment based on the evidence before me and my observations on site. I have not considered this matter further.
4. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in December 2023. I do not consider in this case that this raises any matters that require me to seek any further representations from the parties and I am satisfied that no interests have been prejudiced in this regard.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host properties, including the significance of non-designated heritage assets; and the effect on the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers of Ivy Cottage, with particular regard to privacy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

6. The appeal site relates to 1 and 2 Manor Cottages, a pair of two storey dwellings located in a row of three to the north of Common Lane. The cottages are attached to the side of Whiteley Wood Manor and to the south of Ivy

Cottage. The site is set within an established area of woodland which is surrounded by a landscape of open fields and tree lined lanes.

7. The cottages have a rectangular form with a pitched roof and prominent chimney stacks. They are of red brick construction with render to the northern elevation and gable end. The cottages have been extended to the north (rear) which has resulted in a shallow pitched roof and low eaves level on this side.
8. Despite some previous unsympathetic alterations, the cottages retain elements of interesting design and materials detailing and the evidence indicates that they date from the nineteenth century. Although they are in a poor state of repair, the cottages make a positive contribution to the area by virtue of their simple vernacular style and as part of a tightly knit group of properties. Therefore, the significance of the cottages stems from their traditional character and appearance, and their historic relationship and setting relative to the adjoining Whiteley Moor Manor and Ivy Cottage and the surrounding rural landscape. For these reasons, I share the Council's view that the appeal properties should be treated as non-designated heritage assets.
9. Paragraph 209 of the Framework requires the significance of a non-designated heritage asset to be taken into account in determining an application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
10. The appeal proposal would extend the roof to the rear of the building to create headspace within the new living accommodation at second floor level. A dormer would be installed to the same roof slope to provide space for a new internal staircase, and a number of new roof lights are proposed to both roof slopes.
11. The existing shallow pitched roof to the rear extension means that it reads as a later and subordinate addition to the original cottages. Whilst this roof slope is asymmetrical with the southern roof slope, it is nevertheless a distinctive feature that harmonises with the roofs of the adjacent properties and contributes to the character of the cottages and an understanding of their historic development. The extension above it would significantly change the roof profile of the cottages and dominate the rear roof slope. The extended roof would feature a flat roof to the apex which would be two metres wide. This would be uncharacteristic of the roof profile of the cottages and neighbouring buildings which have traditional pitched roofs.
12. Such harm would be exacerbated by the proposed dormer which would add to the scale of the roof extension. The dormer would have a blank brick wall rather than a window, which would fail to reflect the simple fenestration of the cottages and further diminish their character.
13. Due to the relatively secluded woodland setting of the site, the alterations to the roof would not be prominent when viewed from public vantage points. However, the development would nevertheless be visible from within the appeal site itself and from neighbouring properties, where it would appear as an incongruous and unsympathetic form of development. Therefore, the proposal would be detrimental to the significance of the non-designated heritage assets.

14. The proposal would provide enlarged accommodation within the properties which would benefit future occupiers. However, that could be said of many domestic extensions. I attach limited weight to this factor. Potential benefits would be derived from addressing the ongoing dilapidation of the cottages and removing some of the previous unsympathetic alterations. However, there is no substantive evidence before me to indicate that the appeal proposal is the only way of restoring the properties. The improvements referred to by the appellant, including alterations to the window and door openings and removal of white painted render and the concrete roof tiles, could be undertaken without the proposed extension to the roof taking place. Consequently, the benefits of the proposal are outweighed by my findings as to the harm that would be caused to the significance of the non-designated heritage assets.
15. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host properties and the significance of the non-designated heritage assets. It would be contrary to Policies BE5 and H14 of the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan (1998) (UDP), Policy CS74 of the Sheffield Development Framework Core Strategy (2009) and Guidelines 1 and 2 of the Designing House Extensions Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). Amongst other things, these policies and guidance seek to ensure that development is well designed and respects the scale and form of the original building. The proposal would also conflict with the aims of the Framework in requiring development to be sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment and conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Living conditions

16. The appeal site is directly to the south of Ivy Cottage, a two-storey detached dwelling which contains a number of windows to its rear elevation facing Manor Cottages. There is a garden fence to the rear of the neighbouring property which screens the ground floor windows. However, due to the relatively small gap between them there is some mutual overlooking at close range between the first-floor windows of Ivy Cottage and the appeal properties, which are slightly elevated relative to the neighbouring property.
17. The three roof lights and a dormer proposed to be installed in the northern roof slope of the appeal properties would face towards Ivy Cottage. However, the dormer would have a blank wall and would not provide any views towards the neighbouring property. The proposed section indicates that the roof lights on this side of the roof would be situated towards the top of the roof and above eye level. Therefore, the roof lights would be unlikely to lead to an unacceptable perception of overlooking or loss of privacy to Ivy Cottage.
18. Some other changes are proposed to the fenestration to the northern elevation at both ground and first floor levels, but these would not significantly increase overlooking between Manor Cottages and Ivy Cottage over and above the existing situation.
19. An interested party has raised other concerns about the effect of the proposal in terms of overshadowing. However, the Council have not raised an objection to the proposal in this respect. Given that the overall height of the cottages would not be significantly increased, I do not disagree with the Council's conclusion on this matter.

20. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal scheme would not be harmful to the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers of Ivy Cottage, with particular regard to privacy. Consequently, it would comply with Policy H14 of the UDP and Guideline 6 of the SPG, which, amongst other things, require that the site would not be overdeveloped or deprive residents of light or privacy. It would also accord with paragraph 135 of the Framework where it requires a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Conclusion

21. I have found that the proposal would not be harmful to the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers. However, I have also found that it would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host properties and significance of the non-designated heritage assets. As such, the proposal would be contrary to the development plan and the Framework, and there are no other material considerations of sufficient weight to indicate a decision be taken other than in accordance with the development plan. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Ollerenshaw

INSPECTOR