



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 May 2024

by Elaine Moulton BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 June 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/C9499/W/23/3329633

Grosvenor Place Barn, Main Street, Long Preston, Skipton, Yorkshire BD23 4PP

- 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 Janet Whelan against the decision of Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref is C/52/690A.
 - The development proposed is full planning permission for conversion of barn and outbuilding to form dwelling and annex (part retrospective).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the description of the development from the Authority's Decision Notice, rather than the application form, as it adequately describes the proposal and omits background details.
3. The Appellant has submitted a revised elevations plan with the appeal documents which, on the north side elevation, omits a balcony and replaces patio doors with a window, and removes a ground floor window from the rear elevation. Whilst the appeal process should not be used to evolve a scheme, the amended plans reduce the extent of the alterations to the building. The Authority has had the opportunity to comment on the changes at appeal stage and as such, I do not consider that my taking the revised plan into account would prejudice the Authority, or other interested parties. Accordingly, I have based my decision on the revisions.
4. Whilst the proposed development has commenced it has not been completed. I have therefore assessed the scheme as 'proposed' development.
5. The Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) in December 2023 after the issuing of the Decision Notice. For the avoidance of doubt, where reference is made in this decision to paragraph numbers, they are taken from the latest version of the Framework.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is the extent to which the development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Long Preston Conservation Area, and the effect of the proposal on non-designated heritage assets.

Reasons

7. The appeal site is located within the Long Preston Conservation Area (CA) and the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The site contains two buildings, the form of which, combined with the use of traditional construction techniques and materials, has sufficient aesthetic and historical value to merit their consideration as non-designated heritage assets. Accordingly, I am required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA and to take account of the effect of the proposal on the non-designated heritage assets.
8. The larger building, the Barn, is two-storeys in height, built in sandstone with a small lean-to element attached to its south side elevation. It was constructed with very few openings, as is characteristic of barns in the National Park. The significance of the Barn is derived from its historic and architectural value as a former combination barn and its contribution to the mix of buildings within the Long Preston CA.
9. The proposed annex building (the Annex) is also a two-storey sandstone structure which, due to its small scale, is subservient to the Barn. The significance of the Annex is derived from its spatial relationship to Long Preston and from its historic fabric and architectural value.
10. The CA encompasses the village of Long Preston, the adjoining farmsteads and an extensive area of natural surroundings. Insofar as it relates to this appeal, the significance of the CA lies in the survival of well documented field boundaries and the interesting mix of different building types such as vernacular cottages, traditional farm buildings and Victorian terraces. The buildings within the site positively contribute to the significance of the CA by adding to the mix of buildings.
11. The alterations to the Barn include a significant number of new window openings. Whilst reclaimed and locally sourced materials would be used, the number, size, design and configuration of the windows would, nonetheless, be overly domestic in appearance and would excessively punctuate the building. The introduction of rooflights as proposed would add to the domestic appearance.
12. I acknowledge that it would be necessary to increase the levels of daylight within the Barn if it is to be converted to a dwelling. However, the extent of the proposed alterations would unacceptably compromise its character to a point where the agricultural origins of the building would be no longer legible.
13. There is disagreement between the main parties as to whether the Annex was constructed for use as a smithy or a cottage. Even if I were to accept that it was a cottage, the design, glazing, shallow pitched roof and use of timber boarding of the proposed conservatory would, nevertheless, result in it having a modern appearance that would be harmful to this traditional building. Moreover, the significant increase in its footprint would detract from its subservient nature compared to the Barn.
14. I acknowledge that the extent of glazing in the conservatory would reduce the use of artificial lighting, thereby reducing energy and environmental costs. Nonetheless, there is nothing before me to demonstrate that the large opening

on the north side elevation would not provide an adequate level of natural light if sympathetically glazed.

15. The extent and treatment of the domestic curtilage could be controlled using conditions thereby avoiding harm to the identified heritage assets. Nevertheless, for the above reasons, I find that the proposal would adversely affect the significance of the non-designated heritage assets and that this would lead to less than substantial harm to the character and appearance of the CA.
16. Paragraph 208 of the Framework states that where a development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, that harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Paragraph 209 goes on to state that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
17. The reuse of the redundant buildings would ensure that they do not fall into disrepair and would assist in the maintenance of the adjoining land. The proposal would contribute to the supply of local housing and would have some value in meeting the needs of the appellant who has a protected characteristic as set out in the Equality Act 2010. Furthermore, tree planting around the site would be beneficial to birds and wildlife. However, no substantive evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the conversion of the buildings to residential use could not be achieved, and the needs of the appellant met, in a more sensitive manner.
18. Consequently, I conclude that there are no public benefits of the proposal that would outweigh the less than substantial harm to the CA and the loss of significance to the non-designated heritage assets that I have identified. Furthermore, having due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, the identified harm to heritage assets is not outweighed by the benefits of the development to persons with protected characteristics.
19. Given the above, I conclude that the development would harm the character and appearance of the Long Preston CA and would adversely affect the significance of non-designated heritage assets. It is, therefore, contrary to Policies SP1, SP2, SP4, L1, L2 and L3 of the Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (LP) and to the guidance set out in the DG which, together, require the preservation of the historic environment and local distinctiveness and that development furthers the statutory purposes of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. In addition, it would not satisfy the requirements of Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and paragraph 182 and chapter 16 of the Framework.

Other Matters

20. My attention has been drawn to Building Regulation approval for the works that have been carried out to date. However, this is a different regulatory process, and does not demonstrate that there are no alternative ways to convert the buildings. Therefore, such approval does not justify harm to heritage assets,

nor does the extent of the alterations carried out to the adjoining Grosvenor Barn during its residential conversion.

Conclusion

21. The development conflicts with the development plan when considered as a whole and there are no other considerations, either individually or in combination, that outweighs the identified harm and associated development plan conflict.

22. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Elaine Moulton

INSPECTOR