



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 July 2024

by Paul Martinson BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/W4705/W/24/3342556

4,6,8 John Street, Thornton, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD13 3JS

- 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 Adrian Lowes against the decision of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00587/FUL.
 - The development is described as: 'Replace the fenced yard areas at the rear of 4, 6 and 8 John Street with rear porch/utility room extensions (part retrospective)'.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. This appeal follows an earlier refusal of a similar, retrospective, application for planning permission¹ which was later dismissed at appeal² on the grounds of the harm to the character and appearance of the area.
3. The current appeal is part retrospective in that the extensions are already in place but have not yet been clad with stone as is proposed. Nevertheless, for the avoidance of any doubt I have determined the appeal on the basis of the submitted plans. Any reference to the proposed development or proposal below is a reference to the existing structure once it has been clad with stone.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. John Street comprises of terraced housing fronting the pavement edge and backing onto the back lane, Back John Street. Back John Street also serves the rear of commercial properties that front Thornton Road. The rear of some of these properties have extensions, whilst some include prominent extractor flues. Nonetheless, the area has a traditional character and the modest terraced houses of which the appeal properties form part, contributes to that character. The more modern properties to the west of the terrace, through their materials and minimal external detailing, reinforce this character, despite being more recent additions. Other than the appeal development, the

¹ Ref 23/01928/HOU.

² Ref APP/W4075/W/23/3328704.

- properties along John Street are characterised by dwellings backing onto the edge of the back lane and a lack of projections to the rear elevations.
6. The appeal site comprises of a portion of the land to the rear of Nos 4, 6 and 8 John Street. Unlike any other property along John Street, the appeal extensions project out a significant distance from the rear elevations into the back street. The three extensions have been constructed as a single, substantial structure which, owing to the extent of its projection and the shallow slope of the fibreglass roof, has a somewhat squat appearance. This structure stands out alongside the other John Street properties due to the lack of any similar additions. As such, owing to its scale, massing and position, spanning three properties, the structure appears as an incongruous and prominent addition, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area.
 7. Whilst I accept that there are additions to the rear of the commercial properties, these properties are markedly different in terms of scale and design to the modest terraced housing opposite. These therefore do not provide justification for substantial additions to the rear of the modest John Street properties.
 8. The structure is currently clad in grey WPC, however, as set out above, it is proposed to be faced with stone cladding. This material would be more reflective of the surrounding properties than the WPC. However, the cladding of the external elevations would not reduce the scale and massing of the structure. The extent of projection and the squat appearance would remain, at odds with the neighbouring properties along John Street. Furthermore, I am not convinced that the massing of the structure would be reduced through the use of hardwood strips to define individual properties.
 9. The structure would continue to be highly visible, projecting out from the rear elevation of the terrace into the back lane in views from Chapel Street as well as from Back John Street and the lane at the western end of the terrace. In these views, for the above reasons, despite the cladding of the exterior, it would be seen as an incongruous structure that would not constitute high quality design. It would therefore fail to maintain the character of the individual dwellings or the wider area.
 10. For the above reasons the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policies DS1 and DS3 of the Bradford District Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2017). Together, these policies seek to ensure new development proposals constitute high quality design, informed by an understanding of the site and its context, that responds to the existing positive patterns of development that contribute to the character of the area.

Other Matters

11. I have had regard to the letters in support of the proposal received from local residents as well as those objecting.
12. Part of the development that has been carried out by the appellant has been the repaving of a section of the back lane to the benefit of its users. However, I am not convinced that the repaving of this area was dependent upon the development taking the precise form that it has. Similarly, responses have

highlighted the improvement to lighting within the back street that has arisen through the construction of the extension. However, the provision of lighting is not dependent upon the construction of the extension that is before me. These matters therefore do not outweigh my concerns in relation to the harm to the character and appearance of the area.

13. There are benefits to the occupiers of the John Street properties that have been extended, in terms of improved living space. Nevertheless, those are essentially personal benefits as opposed to the public harm that would result were I to allow the appeal.
14. I acknowledge that there is a dispute in relation to whether the extensions have been constructed over the highway. However, as I am dismissing the appeal, I need not consider this matter any further.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, having considered the development plan as a whole and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Paul Martinson

INSPECTOR