
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 8 October 2024

by H Smith BSc (Hons) MSc MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd October 2024

Appeal A Ref: APP/U2750/W/24/3347578

Woodholme Farm, Aldwark Village, Aldwark, North Yorkshire YO61 1UB

- 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 & Mrs Taylor against the decision of North Yorkshire Council.
 - The application Ref is ZB24/00686/FUL.
 - The development proposed is single storey rear extension.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/U2750/Y/24/3347580

Woodholme Farm, Aldwark Village, Aldwark, North Yorkshire YO61 1UB

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Taylor against the decision of North Yorkshire Council.
 - The application Ref is ZB24/00784/LBC.
 - The works proposed are single storey rear extension.
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Decisions

1. **Appeal A** is dismissed.
2. **Appeal B** is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. As the proposal relates to a listed building which is within a conservation area, I have had special regard to sections 16(2), 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) (the Act).
4. The two appeals concern the same scheme under different, complementary legislation. I have dealt with both appeals together in my reasoning.
5. The principal of an extension has already been established through a previous approval for planning permission (22/02693/FUL) and listed building consent (22/02694/LBC), dated 2 February 2023. The current appeals include some design changes to the single storey extension and the insertion of a first floor window, which would be a repurposing of the existing kitchen window. Other works include the rationalisation of the external pipework on the rear elevation. I have dealt with the appeals on that basis.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve the Grade II listed building known as Woodholme Farm, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Reasons

Special interest and significance

7. The appeal property, Woodholme Farm, is a detached farmhouse that is a Grade II listed¹ building. It dates to the mid-18th Century and is located to the north end of Aldwark village facing Main Street, set behind a brick garden wall.
8. Woodholme Farm is a two-storey, three bay building constructed of red/brown local bricks. The front elevation has a symmetrical design which incorporates a central entrance with a modillion hood, first-floor band, stepped eaves and a dentil cornice. The roof is covered with clay pantiles, with stone copings to each verge and gable chimneys in brick.
9. The symmetry and architectural detail on the front elevation emphasises the status and quality of the building within the village. In contrast, the rear elevation is formed of red/brown brick but has a plainer appearance with a functional arrangement of fenestration to suit room uses. In this respect, the status differentiation between the polite front elevation and the plain, more utilitarian rear elevation of the building is evident. Thus, overall, it remains an attractive historic residence typical of local vernacular building styles.
10. Given the above, I find that the special interest and significance of this heritage asset largely derives from its historic and architectural interests. These are drawn from its illustration of an 18th Century farmhouse of some social status, as well as the historic fabric and features that survive from the physical origins of the historic building. As part of this and pertinent to the appeals, the legibility of the historic architectural form and features of, and distinction between, the primary front and secondary rear elevations is an important contributor.

Proposal and effects

11. Although the proposal would replicate the footprint of the approved scheme (refs: 22/02693/FUL, 22/02694/LBC), a more traditional design approach is proposed. The Georgian style features, such as symmetrical window grids and multiple paned glazing, brick pillars, decorative cornices and pilasters, pediment and reeding detail, would introduce a level of formality and complexity that would not align with the understated look of the plain brick rear elevation. This difference in style would draw attention away from the simplicity of the plain brick elevation, leading to a lack of harmony between the two.
12. In adding such an elaborate structure to the rear, it would undermine the legibility of the primacy of the front elevation and the architectural differentiation between the two. Moreover, the proposal's design would be more in keeping with a large country house or manor house, not a traditional farmhouse, even one with status as part of a large estate.
13. Thus, the proposal would result in a discordant feature that would compete with the historic features of the building's rear elevation to the detriment of the designated heritage asset. It would weaken the authenticity and integrity of the asset and confuse the onlooker as to the building's narrative.

¹ List Entry Number: 1151294 – Wood Holme Farmhouse, Grade II

14. In contrast, the approved scheme for a modern full-length glass extension would maintain a respectful and honest relationship with the listed building. This is because it would clearly distinguish the new addition from the original historic fabric. This clarity in design would respect the building's heritage by avoiding any attempt to mimic or falsely replicate a historical style, making it clear which parts of the structure are historical and which are contemporary.
15. The proposal would also include the insertion of a first floor window to serve the bathroom on the rear elevation. The window would be of Yorkshire sash style, which would reflect the historic first floor window to the opposite end of the elevation.
16. The insertion of a new opening in the building's rear elevation would remove a section of brick walling which would result in the irrevocable loss of historic fabric. This would negatively alter the historic integrity of the building and the authenticity of how it is experienced.
17. Furthermore, the Council has indicated that the blank brick walling in this part of the first floor rear elevation is a characteristic feature of the property where windows were not inserted to overlook functional parts of the site. I have not been presented with any evidence to indicate otherwise. Thus, altering the rear elevation with a new window at first floor level would make it difficult to understand the building's development over time.
18. The appellant has suggested removing the gable window in favour of the insertion of the rear window which would enable the bricks to be used in the infilling of the gap. However, bricking up a window tends to look like an obvious and awkward modification, rather than a natural part of the building's fabric. This is due to subtle changes in the wall's texture, differences in mortar colour, and variations in the brickwork pattern that would give away the previous location of the window. This would disrupt both the visual coherence and historical authenticity of the listed building.
19. Drawing the above together, I find that the proposal would not preserve the Grade II listed building, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. In doing so, it would harm the significance of this designated heritage asset.

Public benefits and balance

20. With reference to paragraphs 207 and 208 of the Framework, in finding harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the magnitude of that harm should be assessed. Given the extent and fairly localised nature of the proposal, I find that the harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset assessed above would be 'less than substantial' but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight. Paragraph 208 of the Framework requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including where appropriate, securing the asset's optimum viable use.
21. In this case, economic benefits would be delivered through the manufacturing and construction phase and the general investment into the property. I also acknowledge that the proposal would rationalise the external pipework to the rear elevation and would re-use the existing ground floor kitchen window. Nevertheless, I am not persuaded that similar benefits could not be achieved

by a proposal which would be less harmful to the significance of this designated heritage asset.

22. Additionally, no compelling evidence is before me which confirms that the property would not be usable or viable as a dwelling or that its future would be at risk if the appeals were to fail and the development and works as proposed were not implemented. In these respects, the identified harm to the significance of the listed building has not been clearly and convincingly justified.
23. On balance, in giving considerable importance and weight to the harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, I find that this would not be outweighed by the limited public benefits arising from the proposal.
24. I conclude that the proposal would not preserve the Grade II listed building, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. It would therefore fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and the provisions within the Framework which seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment.
25. It would also conflict with Policies S7, E1 and E5 of the Hambleton Local Plan (adopted 2022). Collectively, these policies amongst other things, seek to ensure development is of high quality and reinforces local distinctiveness, and conserves heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. The proposal would also conflict with guidance set out in the Council's Domestic Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (adopted 2009), which amongst other things, seeks to achieve high standards of design and ensure that development does not cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling.

Other Matters

26. The appeal property is located within the Aldwark Conservation Area (CA). Mindful of the statutory duty under section 72(1) of the Act, I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing its character or appearance. The CA, which includes Main Street, is characterised by its rural setting and its historic village atmosphere. The buildings are mainly constructed from local brick with distinctive red pantile roofs. Aldwark's layout comprises a linear pattern that follows the main street, featuring wide grass verges and spacious front gardens that add to its open, rural feel. The special interest and significance of the CA mainly stems from the varying ages and architectural styles of its buildings that reflect the evolution of the village.
27. The appeal listed building largely retains its overall external historic character and detailing and therefore makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA as a whole and thereby to its significance as a designated heritage asset.
28. Given the limited scale of the proposal and its siting to the rear of the property, the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the CA as a whole and would not harm its significance as a designated heritage asset. I note the Council raised no concerns in this respect either.
29. I acknowledge that the Georgian Group and the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) did not object to the proposal, and the CBA considered that the design of the extension would amount to a personal preference rather than impacting

the significance of the building. However, the design of a rear extension to a building, especially if the building is listed, is not simply a matter of personal preference but is guided by planning judgement. Moreover, the CBA advised that "the aim of the alterations should be to sit quietly against the host dwelling. This should entail restraining the mock Georgian embellishments in terms of the design and scale of the proposed pediment etc." For the reasons explained, I have concluded that the proposal would not sit quietly and would be harmful to the listed building.

30. My attention has been drawn to a previous lean-to extension on the host building, which had a multi-paned approach to the fenestration. From the image it appears to be a lean-to extension with fixed, multi-pane fenestration and did not possess features such as elaborate parapet detailing. While I acknowledge the presence of previous extensions/additions, they do not justify the proposal before me.
31. My attention has also been drawn to a recent approval in Snape (Ref: 21/02162/LBC), which proposed a new opening in the gable of the existing building. However, the extent of the historic building on site and its local context is unclear, and I have not been presented with sufficient details to make a suitable comparison. As such, I cannot be certain that the circumstances are similar to the proposal before me. Consequently, this consideration does not alter my decisions.
32. The appellant has also highlighted a number of previous approvals for Georgian style extensions. Nevertheless, I have not been presented with the full details of these previous approvals. It is likely that these other developments relate to differently configured buildings that are set within a different site context to the appeal building. In any event, I have determined these appeals on their own merits based on the information before me and my own observations of the area.
33. The appellant has indicated their willingness to work with the Conservation Officer to amend the application and reach a compromise. Nonetheless, there is insufficient information before me to demonstrate how this would be achieved and I have based my decision on the submitted plans.

Conclusion

34. **Appeal A:** The proposed development would conflict with the development plan when taken as a whole. There are no material considerations which indicate that the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that Appeal A should be dismissed.
35. **Appeal B:** For the reasons given, I conclude that Appeal B should be dismissed.

H Smith

INSPECTOR