



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 April 2025

by M Clowes BA (Hons) MCD PG CERT (Arch Con) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N4720/D/25/3358974

7 The Drive, Lidgett Park, Leeds LS8 1JF

- 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 Marcella Chamberlain against the decision of Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/03319/FU.
 - The development proposed is described as the 'installation of small glass porch to the front door of the house.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. Since the development has been carried out, retrospective planning permission has been sought. I have determined the appeal on this basis.
3. Despite the extension to the dwelling arising from the enclosure of the previous canopy roof, the submitted plans do not include a floor plan. Nonetheless, the plans before me are those determined by the Council. I am satisfied that there is sufficient detail on the proposed elevations and from my site visit to assess the impact on the Conservation Area.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in relation to this appeal is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Roundhay Conservation Area (RCA).

Reasons

5. In accordance with the duty imposed by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act), I am required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the RCA.
6. The RCA is characterised by its suburban built form of late Victorian, Edwardian and inter-war housing, in well laid out often tree-lined streets, in proximity to an extensive late Georgian park. There is some variation in architectural styles and forms. However, the position of dwellings behind low front walls and landscaped gardens, along with the consistent use of pitched roofs, sandstone facing materials, vertically proportioned windows and open-sided porches are unifying characteristics. It is this spatial composition and the architectural quality of the built form that shapes the significance of the RCA.

7. The appeal site is one such detached, late Victorian sandstone villa, with a steeply pitched projecting gable feature to the front elevation. A ground floor bay window with a canopy roof extending over the entrance door, provides further architectural enhancement of the dwelling's front elevation. The dwelling has a diminishing scale of fenestration from ground floor level with vertically proportioned timber sash windows set in stone mullions. These characteristics are shared with neighbouring properties to the north and east. Due to its age and architectural quality, the appeal building makes an important and positive contribution to the character and appearance of the RCA, as acknowledged in the Roundhay Conservation Area Appraisal (RCAA)¹.
8. A glazed panel and sliding door have been added to the front elevation of the appeal building, utilising the existing canopy roof to create an enclosed porch. Glazing is often reflective. During my visit I observed that the addition of the glazed panel and door creates a dark area internally, that prevents the attractive stained glass front door from immediate observation. Obscuring the front door in this way contrasts with the observable panelled front doors that form an important and visible architectural feature on the same house types within the street scene.
9. Even if I could accept that the glazing is transparent and lightweight, the UPVC framing is not. Its chunky composition is in stark contrast to the refined and slender proportions of the timber framed windows found within the front elevation. This is particularly the case in respect of the framing between the upper and lower panes which results in narrow, squat and horizontally proportioned windows above the doorway. These further fail to line through with the meeting rail of the adjacent sashes. The adjacent bay window is also crowded such that its original function as an important architectural feature is diminished.
10. Rather than being a modern, unobtrusive small-scale feature, the porch fails to respect the proportions and architectural quality of the host building as described above. In doing so, it undermines the key features that it shares with neighbouring properties and that contribute to the significance of the RCA. For this reason, altering the colour of the UPVC frame via a planning condition would not address the adverse effect of the development.
11. As the proposal causes a harmful change to the appearance of the host building, it would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the RCA. It would therefore conflict with Policies P10, P11 and P12 of the Leeds Local Plan; Core Strategy (2019) and Policies BD6, BC7 and N19 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan) 2006. Taken collectively, these seek to secure high quality design, conservation and enhancement of the historic environment, and ensure that the scale, form and design of the development is appropriate to its context, including the character and quality of surrounding buildings. Conflict would also arise with the statutory test and paragraph 210 of the Framework which indicates that development should sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
12. Furthermore, the proposal would fail to accord with the guidance in the Householder Design Guide (2012) which requires porches to be small, sympathetically designed structures using matching materials. As the RCAA is a statement of character, I have not concluded against this document.

¹ The appeal site is identified as an 'other positive building' in the RCAA's appraisal plan area 5 – west of the park.

13. I acknowledge that due to the set back of the dwelling behind the front garden and the presence of trees within the street, the impact of the porch is localised to views in proximity to the appeal site. In the words of the Framework, the harm to the significance of the RCA would be less than substantial, but this should not be taken to mean a less than substantial objection. Paragraph 215 of the Framework therefore directs me to weigh the identified harm against the public benefits of the proposal.

Heritage Balance

14. The appellant has referred to practical benefits of the porch but has not provided specific details. It seems to me that the porch will provide shelter from adverse weather but the original canopy roof will have already had some advantage in this respect. Any public benefits accruing from improving a dwelling within the housing stock would be of very limited weight, given the small scale of the development. No further tangible public benefits have been advanced by the appellant.
15. Consequently, when considering the special regard I must have to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the RCA, I find that the harm arising from the proposal, would not be outweighed by public benefits.

Other Matters

16. Support for a proposal does not indicate a lack of harm and there have been a number of objections to the proposal. This does not affect my findings.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons set out above, the development would conflict with the statutory requirements of the Act and the development plan. There are no other considerations advanced that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan, including the Framework. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

M Clowes

INSPECTOR