



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 April 2025

by **E Dade BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/J2210/D/25/3358513

8 Becket Mews, Canterbury, Kent CT2 8DF

- 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 A Mylona against the decision of Canterbury City Council.
 - The application Ref is CA/24/00192.
 - The development proposed is conversion of loft space including rear dormer and 2no rooflights to front elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for conversion of loft space including rear dormer and 2no rooflights to front elevation at 8 Becket Mews, Canterbury, Kent CT2 8DF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref CA/24/00192, and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: P01 - *Existing and proposed plans and elevations*.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension shall match those used in the existing building.

Preliminary Matters

2. As the proposal is in a conservation area, I have had special regard to s72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, with particular regard to whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Canterbury (West Station) Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey, end of terrace dwelling situated in Becket Mews, a small, modern courtyard development. The area is compact with a fine-grain street pattern and has an urban character.
5. Becket Mews is enclosed by the built form of surrounding streets. The appeal property is tucked behind the large Woolstore building, and views of its frontage

are limited to the parking area within Becket Mews. Therefore, the appeal property is not visually prominent and makes only a small contribution to the character of the street scene.

6. The appeal property is within the Canterbury (West Station) Conservation Area (CA). The CA covers an area encompassing Canterbury West Station and surrounding streets which demonstrate the Victorian expansion of Canterbury, following arrival of the railways.
7. The CA's significance is drawn from its landmark buildings which demonstrate the former industrial uses of the area from the mid-19th century, and from its residential streets of late-Victorian and Edwardian development to the north-east of the station which exhibit a variety of architectural and decorative features.
8. Since the appeal property was constructed in the 1980s, it is not contemporary with buildings that are formative of the CA's character, and the appeal property's contribution to the CA's character is neutral. Consequently, the proposal would not affect any building that makes a strong contribution to the CA's significance.
9. The proposal would include the addition of a rear dormer and two rooflights to the front of the appeal property. The rooflights would be of a limited size and, subject to utilising complementary materials, would be acceptable in visual terms. I am therefore satisfied that the proposed rooflights would maintain the visual amenity of the street scene.
10. The proposed rear dormer would be constructed in materials to match the appeal property, with red plain tiles and a white sash window. It would be set above the eaves, beneath the ridge, and set in from the sides of the roof slope and would therefore be subservient to the form of the appeal property's roof. Therefore, the proposal would not significantly change the overall form of the appeal property, and the urban grain of development would be unaltered.
11. From my site visit, I observed a mix of dormer windows in the area, including at the prominent neighbouring building, The Woolstore. Differing building heights, roof forms, and materials, contribute variety across the skyline. Therefore, the proposed dormer would not be out of keeping with the surrounding built form.
12. Since the dormer would be situated on the appeal property's rear roof slope, it would not be visible from the dwelling's frontage. Therefore, the proposed dormer would have no effect on the street scene of Becket Mews.
13. The rear of the appeal property is oriented toward dwellings at Carriage Mews. This provides a high degree of enclosure, and no publicly accessible locations offering direct views of the appeal property's rear roof slope are identified.
14. It would be possible to view the side profile of the proposed dormer via the gap between nos 12 and 14 Kirby's Lane, a narrow vehicular access serving a parking court and garages to the rear. Therefore, the proposed dormer would be only partly visible within the public realm, and any views would be experienced as mere glimpses by passing pedestrians and road users.
15. Since the appeal property is set back beyond the plot boundaries and garages of nos 12 and 14, the proposed dormer would appear distant from Kirby's Lane. Therefore, the proposal would not harm the street scene of Kirby's Lane.

16. Due to the limited visibility of the proposed development within the public domain, the proposal would not change how the significance of the CA is experienced or understood. Therefore, the proposal would not be detrimental to the character of the CA and would preserve its significance.
17. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore preserve the character and appearance of the CA, thus satisfying the requirements of the Act.
18. The proposal would therefore comply with Canterbury District Local Plan 2017 (CDLP) Policies HE1 and HE6 which support proposals which protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment, including development within a conservation area where it preserves its special architectural or historic character.
19. In addition, the proposal would comply with CDLP Policy DBE3 which requires proposals be of high-quality design, having regard to considerations including visual impact on local townscape character and landscape and the skyline, and CDLP Policy DBE6 which permits alterations and extensions to buildings where compatible with the character of the original building.

Other Matters

20. To the immediate west of the site is Grade II listed building 'The Woolstore'¹, and further west at Kirby's Lane are Grade II listed buildings nos 13², 14 & 15³. The Woolstore is an early-19th century, former industrial building with three-storeys, constructed of red brick with grey headers, a hipped, tiled roof and prominent dormers. It has curved brick details above its many window openings. No 13 is an early-19th century, two-storey red brick building, with a sash window with glazing bars, and a round-headed doorcase. Nos 14 & 15 is an early-19th century, two-storey red brick building, with a simple doorcase, rectangular fanlight, and continuous glazing at the first floor. The buildings form a group and possess historic and architectural interest that contributes to their significance.
21. Views of The Woolstore are experienced principally from within Becket Mews and via the junction, whereas nos 13, 14 & 15 front onto Kirby's Lane. As discussed above, the proposed rooflights would represent a small change to the appeal property's appearance, and the dormer would not be visually prominent due to its siting on the appeal property's rear roof slope. Therefore, the proposal would not detract from views of this listed building group and would preserve the special interest of the listed building group and their settings.
22. Concerns were raised regarding the effect of the proposal on privacy and outlook of the occupants of neighbouring dwellings. A modest garden provides separation between the dwelling's rear elevation and the boundary with neighbouring plots. The proposed dormer window would be situated on the rear of the dwelling where there are existing first-floor windows, and therefore would not substantially increase opportunities for overlooking. The rooflights would overlook the parking area to the front, where existing dwellings face the street. Therefore, I am satisfied the proposal would not result in an unacceptable level of overlooking.

¹ List entry no. 1240920

² List entry no. 1240918

³ List entry no. 1240921

Conditions

23. In addition to the standard time limit for implementation, in the interests of certainty I have attached a condition specifying the approved plans.
24. To maintain the character and appearance of the area, I have included a condition requiring external materials match the existing building.

Conclusion

25. For the reasons given above, having regard to the development plan taken as a whole and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude the appeal should be allowed.

E Dade

INSPECTOR