
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 October 2025

by **A James BSc (Hons) MA MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21st October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/J2210/W/25/3368993

1 Bourne Cottages, The Street, Bishopsbourne, Kent CT4 5HZ

- 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 Philip Ellis of Divine Loft Conversions against the decision of Canterbury City Council.
 - The application reference is CA/25/00452.
 - The development proposed is raise the hip of the main roof to a barn hip to form a loft conversion with roof windows (no dormers).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have taken the proposal description from the appeal form as it more accurately reflects the nature of the proposal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Bishopsbourne Conservation Area and the locally listed building.

Reasons

4. The appeal property forms part of a terrace, which dates back to the mid-to-late 19th century. The terrace is locally listed by the Council and therefore deemed to be a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA). The terrace is two storeys high and constructed of red brick in Flemish bond, with some burnt headers and has a clay tiled roof. The terrace has been extended on either end, but still retains its hipped roof form and sense of symmetry. Rooflights are present on the rear facing roof slope of the terrace. The appeal property has a modern, single-storey rear projection.
5. The terrace as a NDHA by definition, must possess of itself a degree of heritage significance. Based on the evidence before me and my site visit, I find that the building's significance derives from its local historic and architectural interest as an illustration of a 19th century terrace property. Even though the terrace has been extended, I find that its simplistic roof form, surviving historic fabric and presence of traditional materials make important contributions in these regards.
6. While the locally listed status of the building provides no statutory protection, the appeal property lies within the Bishopsbourne Conservation Area (CA). Section 72

- (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA.
7. The CA encompasses the historic core of a small settlement, which is nestled at the foot of a valley. The significance of the CA insofar as is relevant to this appeal derives from the high quality vernacular architecture of differing styles and periods and the presence of traditional materials. The locally listed building by reason of its pleasing and simplistic architectural form, surviving historic fabric and use of traditional materials makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA.
 8. The proposal seeks to change the hip on one end of the terrace to a barn hip in order to accommodate a staircase for the proposed loft conversion. A small window is also proposed on the side elevation of the building. While I appreciate that there are a variety of roof forms in the local area, including gables and mansard roofs, these relate to buildings of differing architectural styles. I find that the proposal would disrupt the simple roof form of the terrace and erode the sense of symmetry that it currently exhibits. The proposed barn hip would introduce an uncharacteristic roof form to this terrace, which would fail to respect the architectural character of the building. Accordingly, I find that the proposal would harm the significance of the NDHA and the contribution that it makes to the character and appearance of the CA.
 9. I do not find that the proposed rooflights on the rear facing roof slope would be harmful to the significance of the NDHA or the character and appearance of the CA. This is because views of the rear roof slope from the public realm are restricted by the existing built form and rooflights are already present on the rear facing roof slope of this terrace.
 10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal scheme fails to preserve the character and appearance of the CA, as a whole and the significance of the NDHA. Given the nature and extent of the proposal, I find the harm to the significance of the CA to be 'less than substantial' and at the lower end of the scale. However, this should not be equated with a less than substantial planning objection and is of considerable importance and weight. Paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the appeal scheme, including where appropriate, securing the asset's optimum viable use.
 11. The proposal would provide an enhanced standard of accommodation for the occupants, which is a private benefit. Turning to the public benefits, the proposal would result in investment into the property, which would have a small economic benefit, which I give limited weight as a public benefit. There is no compelling evidence before me that the use of the building as a residential dwelling would cease in the absence of the proposed changes and I do not find them necessary to secure the viability and long-term conservation of the building as a result. Consequently, in attributing considerable importance and weight to the identified harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, I find that there would be insufficient public benefits arising from the proposal to outweigh this harm.
 12. Given the above, I conclude that, on balance, the proposal would fail to preserve the significance of the CA as a whole, and the significance of the NDHA. The

proposal would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and the historic environment policies of the Framework. The proposal would conflict with Policies HE1, HE4, HE5 and HE6 of the Canterbury District Local Plan July 2017. These policies among other things seek to protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment, preserve or enhance the special architectural or historic character or appearance of a CA and have special regard to the desirability of preserving a locally listed building and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Other Matters

13. 'Church of St Mary' is a Grade I listed building (Ref: 1085693). Based on the evidence before me and my site visit, I find that the listed building's special interest insofar as is relevant to this appeal is derived from its historic and architectural interest as an illustration of ecclesiastical architecture from around the 13th century. The building's architectural form, use of traditional materials, the surrounding historic built form and picturesque landscape in which it sits make important contributions in these regards.
14. The appeal property is some distance away from the Church of St Mary and separated from it by other built form and vegetation. In accordance with the statutory duty imposed by section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, I have had special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of the listed building in the determination of this appeal. Given the location and nature of the appeal proposal, I am satisfied that there would be no harm to the special interest of the listed building through changes to its setting.

Conclusion

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

A James

INSPECTOR