

NEWBURY 17/01333/LBC2 17/01332/FULD	154 Bartholomew Street Newbury Hart Street Properties	Change of use of first, second and third floor from office (B1) to residential use (C3) to form two 2 bed and one 1 bed apartments	Dele. Refusal	Allowed 15.6.18
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Appeal A: APP/W0340/Y/17/3185545

The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted for change of use of first, second and third floor from office (Class B1) to residential use (Class C3) to form 2 no. 2 bed and 1 no. 1 bed apartments, at 154 Bartholomew Street, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 5HB, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 17/01332/LBC, dated 8 May 2017 subject to the following conditions:-

- 1) The works hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The materials to be used in the works hereby approved shall be as set out in the Planning and Heritage Impact Statement, Approved Plans and Application Form.

Appeal B: APP/W0340/W/17/3185546

The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for change of use of first, second and third floors to residential use (Class C3) to form 2 no. 2 bed and 1 no. 1 bed apartments at 154 Bartholomew Street, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 5HB in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 17/01333/LBC2, dated 8 May 2017, subject to the following conditions:-

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with drawing title numbers: Location Plan 03; Existing and Proposed Floor Plans and Roof Plan 01 rev A, and; Existing and Proposed Elevations 02.
- 3) The materials to be used in the development hereby approved shall be as set out in the Planning and Heritage Impact Statement, Approved Plans and Application Form.
- 4) No dwelling shall be occupied until the cycle storage area shown at first floor level has been provided. The approved cycle store area will be retained for this purpose at all times, unless alternative storage arrangements are agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Procedural matters

The Council's decision in relation to Appeal A states that the west face of the roof has not been altered and contributes to the special interest of the building. However, it is clear from the appellant's evidence (which has not been disputed by the Council) that the building was completely demolished following listed building consent that was granted subsequent to referral of the application to the Secretary of State for the Environment and Transport in 1983. A subsequent revised application that included works of demolition was also granted in 1984.

It appears that the list entry refers to details of the front elevation before the building was demolished and which no longer exists. However, there is agreement between the parties that the front façade has been rebuilt to closely reflect the previous building and that it remains listed for the purposes of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the 1990 Act). The Inspector considered the appeal on this basis.

Main Issues

Accordingly, the main issues are firstly, in respect of both appeals, whether the appeal scheme would preserve the Grade II listed building at 154 Bartholomew Street or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses; and secondly, in terms of Appeal B, the effects of the dormer windows on the character and appearance of the Newbury Conservation Area.

Reasons

Special interest and significance

No. 154 Bartholomew Street comprises a 3-storey building that was completely rebuilt in the mid-1980s to reflect its previous style in terms of its front façade. Re-built using reclaimed multi-coloured stock bricks laid in Flemish-bond under a tiled hipped roof, the building incorporates a traditional timber shopfront at ground floor, two bays at first floor and three timber sash windows that replaced two sash windows and a blind recess at second floor. Apart from the brickwork, these elements of the front elevation date from the mid-1980s and are of no historic significance. The building forms part of a terrace of properties in the heart of the town centre with the prominent three storey neo-Gothic former local government building located on the corner of Bartholomew Street and Wharf Street immediately to the north with a neatly proportioned Grade II 3-storey late-eighteenth-early nineteenth century grey coloured brick building incorporating traditional shopfronts and multi-pane sash windows below a slate roof to the south. Directly opposite lies the Grade I St Nicholas' Church, founded in the Norman period and rebuilt in the 16th century. Of medieval origin in layout, the east side of Bartholomew Street appears to have been laid out in burgage plots and still retains its post-medieval character.

The special architectural interest and significance of No. 154 Bartholomew Street is most evidently expressed in the classical proportions, the symmetry of its architectural detailing and harmonious external building fabric. The front elevation although having a shallower roof than either of its immediate neighbours contributes significantly to the variety of architectural forms within the terrace, which reflects its Group value status on the list description. It is however the detailing of the brickwork, including the red gauged brick arches to the upper storey windows and the symmetrical positioning of windows that defines the special interest, notwithstanding the building's provenance.

The proposed works

The proposed internal alterations involve the conversion of the modern office accommodation at first and second floors and within the attic space to create three residential flats. The subdivision of the internal space at each level will be formed through simple partitioning. Externally, the proposed works will involve the replacement of the second floor windows with 6-pane timber sash windows and the removal of timber apron supports to the first floor bays and their replacement with timber supporting brackets.

In addition, and of concern to the Council is the proposal to install three small dormer windows within the roofspace and designed to provide an enhanced environment for occupiers of the proposed two-bed flat at third floor. The proposed dormers would be square in shape, incorporate a flat roof and be externally clad with lead.

Effect on the special interest of the building

It is the case that the building is at best a facsimile of the former listed building. The only element of the replacement building that appears to have some degree of vintage is the brickwork used to reconstruct the front elevation.

The proposals at least in part involve the insertion of dormers that are of appropriate appearance and provenance and which would be set well within the roofslope below ridge level. They are of modest size and well-proportioned.

The Council raise no objection to the internal alterations or to the replacement of the second floor windows with 6-pane sash windows and removal of timber skirt supports to the first floor bays and their replacement with timber supporting brackets. The Inspector agreed with the Council's assessment.

None of these works involve the removal of historic fabric.

From what he saw of the front face of roof fronting Bartholomew Street, whilst the hipped roof is a reconstruction of the original roof incorporating steel portal framing, it is relatively featureless by comparison with neighbouring roofs. He agreed with the appellant that other nearby examples of traditional and authentic roofscapes are generally of much grander design and the varied rooflines, robust chimney stacks and, indeed, dormer windows create a sense of architectural rhythm. Certainly, dormer windows are a feature of the Conservation Area.

The Inspector considered that the proposed dormers set below the ridgeline are modest in their design and of traditional appearance and proportion. Although on cursory inspection, the roof represents an acceptable

facsimile of the building's previous roof structure, it is clearly of limited historical and architectural interest. The proposed dormers to his mind are evidently an honest interpretation of traditional dormers found elsewhere in this historic town centre and the Inspector did not find that they would be harmful to the significance of this particular heritage asset.

Accordingly and having regard to the particular circumstances described above, the proposed dormers would avoid harm to the special interest and significance of the Grade II listed building, but would rather preserve its special architectural and historic interest in line with the duties placed on me under sections 16(2) and 66 (1) of the 1990 Act. As such, the Inspector found no conflict with Policies CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, which require all new development and works to preserve or enhance the character of listed buildings. These policies are in line with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).

Effects of on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area

The Inspector was also cognizant of the duty arising from section 72 (1) of the 1990 Act. Additionally, as he had found that the roof fronting Bartholomew Street is of modest design, he considered that the insertion of the three dormers would enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area by bringing about a more elegant form and through providing a more interesting and varied roofline. It would thus be in accordance with paragraph 132 of the Framework, which attaches great weight to the conservation of designated heritage assets and their settings.

Conditions

The Council has suggested a number of conditions and he considered the matter having regard to the advice contained in paragraph 206 of the Framework and in accordance with the Planning Practice Guidance. He had attached a condition specifying the approved plans that have received planning permission for certainty. So that the works shall be carried out in a sensitive manner having regard to the building's special interest and the character of the Conservation Area more generally, he considered it necessary to include a condition that specifies all external materials. The planning permission granted also requires the provision of cycle facilities in accordance with the Council's policies

Conclusions

For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised, the Inspector concluded that both appeals should be allowed.

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