The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 October 2012

by Mrs A L Fairclough MA, BSc(Hons), LLB(Hons), PGDipLP, MRTPI, IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 17 December 2012

Appeal Ref: APP/H1033/A/12/2180561
Queen Street, Glossop SK13 8EL

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr Martin Mellor against the decision of High Peak Borough Council.
- The application Ref HPK/2012/0049, dated 3 February 2012, was refused by notice dated 26 March 2012.
- The development proposed is described as '2 new houses'.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The appeal site address can be more clearly described as land adjacent to No 60 Queen Street, Glossop SK13 8EL. It is on this basis that I determine the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the appeal proposal on the character and appearance of the locality including the setting of the adjacent Wrens Nest Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. Queen Street is a residential street which is dominated by rows of Victorian terraced properties with paveline frontages constructed in stone with slate roofs. Opposite the appeal site is a recent development of modern terraced properties some of which are set back from the back edge of footway to allow for off-street parking on the forecourts. There is minimal soft landscaping, except in rear gardens where visible, and whilst there is a steep slope to Queens Road, the views in and out of the area and between buildings are limited. Although the type of dwelling is predominantly terraced properties, the juxtaposition of these dwellings and their simple design and use of materials has a rhythm and uniformity. In addition, the grid iron street pattern around Queen Street introduces a feeling of containment. I consider these features contribute to the character of the area.

5. The appeal site includes a domestic type garage within a plot of overgrown vegetation, including shrubs and trees. It is enclosed by a timber fence and has vehicular access, via a metal gate, onto Queen Street. Immediately to the south of the appeal site is the side garden of No 60 Queen Street.

Immediately to the north of the appeal site are the gardens to the rear of nearby properties fronting High Street West. These properties (and gardens) are within the Wrens Nest Conservation Area. Thus the appeal site abuts the conservation area.

6. The appeal proposal includes the removal of the garage and the erection of a pair of semi-detached dwellings. Although the style, mass, roof form and pitch, and the use of matching materials would reflect the character of other dwellings in the locality, the appeal dwellings would be separated from the nearest development to the north and south by open garden areas and as such would appear as an isolated structure in what is otherwise a close knit form of existing development. In addition they would be distinctly different to the nearby dwellings on the east side of Queen Street in terms of their semi-detached form and set back from the back edge of the existing footway. Furthermore, the relationship and size of the proposed fenestration would appear discordant when compared with the size and pattern of openings on the older buildings on Queen Street. Thus the overall form and design would appear out of scale and character when compared with the Victorian dwellings in the locality. With the combination of the uncharacteristic form and design details and its isolated position, the appeal scheme would create an incongruous scheme out of keeping with the established development on Queen Street. Consequently, given its prominent location close to a junction, I consider the proposal would appear as an intrusive feature in the streetscene.

7. As previously mentioned the appeal site abuts a conservation area. The setting of a heritage asset can be described as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced, more specifically it is explained as embracing all of the surroundings from which the heritage asset can be experienced or that can be experienced from or with the asset. Given its incongruity in terms of isolation, and to a lesser extent, the fenestration, I consider that the appeal proposal would have a deleterious impact on the setting of the Wrens Nest Conservation Area and this would harm it. The harm it causes to the significance of the adjacent conservation area is less than substantial on the basis that the conservation area is very large and the appeal scheme would affect only a small part of its setting. Paragraph 134 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (The Framework) states that where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

8. The proposal would provide some benefit to the general streetscene, notably it would tidy the derelict site and would make efficient use of previously developed land. However, the site could be improved with general maintenance and landscaping. This modest public benefit therefore does not outweigh the harm that I have identified.

9. I note that the appellant has referred to the recent housing development opposite the appeal site on the west side of Queen Street. However, unlike the appeal proposal that group of new houses is not isolated from the existing terraced dwellings to the south and so appears as part of the established built form. In addition, I saw that those new dwellings positioned immediately next to the Victorian terraced houses reflect the traditional layout by being located at the back edge of footway. Moreover, although several dwellings in that development are set back from the footway to provide off-street parking, these dwellings are terraced in form and reflect the dominant form of development

along Queen Street. I note reference to other developments in the Glossop area. However, I am unaware of the full background of these schemes. In any case, I am required to determine each appeal on its own merits and in the light of current policy. I have done so in this case.

Conclusions

10. I conclude that the appeal proposal would harm the character and appearance of the locality and would not preserve the setting of the Wrens Nest Conservation Area. It would conflict with saved Policies BC5, GD4 and H11 of the *High Peak Local Plan* 2005 which relate to new development that affects conservation areas, the general character, form and design of new development and that new development reflects its setting and local distinctiveness respectively. These policies are broadly in accordance with the Framework and so, in accordance with paragraph 214, I accord them full weight.

11. Furthermore the Framework states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

12. For the reasons given above and having regard to all matters raised, the appeal should not succeed.

Mrs A Fairclough

INSPECTOR