

PLANNING STATEMENT

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Erection of two storey rear extension

17 Town Gate

Upperthong

Holmfirth

HD9 3UX

October 2024

Background

The application site relates to 17 Town Gate, which is an unlisted two-storey dwelling situated in the Upperthong Conservation Area and fronting on to Town Gate.

Town Gate is narrow and surrounded on both sides by vernacular stone buildings, which are typically cottages and farm buildings dating back to at least the 18th Century.

The Royal Oak Inn is situated directly to the west of the site, to the further west is a historic footpath (HOL/72/20) which runs in a north / south direction. Grade II listed buildings are 30m to the west and 65m to the east of the site with intervening buildings between.

The southern part of the site is a large undeveloped area of land which is part of the ownership of the applicant, with the host dwelling being the northerly and eastern part of this area of open land.

The south facing rear elevations of the historic buildings along Town Gate are vernacular in style, with mullioned windows, stone elevations and mostly linear stone slate pitched roofs, which all contribute to the character of the settlement. Single storey extensions have been constructed to the rear of several buildings along the row and some of these make a negative contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, including the existing white conservatory on the rear of the host building. Despite this, the historic character and function of the buildings along Town Gate can still be understood, with their simple roof forms and vernacular materials and detailing surviving.

Proposed development

The proposed development consists of the erection of a two-storey extension to the south facing rear of the property. This extension would replace the existing single storey conservatory and would sit on a slightly extended footprint with a first floor above with a gable and a pitched roof running at right angles to the existing roof.

Planning history

A planning application (2022/92799) for the erection of extensions, conversion of existing attached barn to living accommodation, and associated works was approved, subject to conditions, in October 2023.

As part of the consideration of this application, which originally included a two-storey rear extension, the Council's Conservation Officer opined that the construction of a substantial extension on the historic rear elevation would result in a loss of character and legibility of the building, which contributes to the character of the Conservation Area, and so would therefore be contrary to Policy LP35 of the Local Plan. The proposed extension would also not comply with Policy LP24 of the Local Plan, which requires development to respect or enhance the character of the townscape or the Conservation Area. The Conservation Officer considered that the introduction of extensive glazing and green oak framed rear extension would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, which is characterised predominantly by natural stone, and therefore did not comply with

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act.

As a result of these comments, the applicant has significantly amended this element of the proposed scheme. Permission was granted, however, for a single storey extension with lean-to roof and rooflights to replace the existing conservatory.

The scheme, as approved, is now being implemented with the conversion of the barn. It should be noted at this point that the applicant does not intend to build the approved single storey side extension of the approved scheme and has not commenced any works to the rear of the existing dwelling.

Relevant planning policies

Kirklees Local Plan (2019)

LP1 Achieving Sustainable Development

LP2 Place Shaping

LP24 Design

LP35 Historic Environment

Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan

Policy 1 – Protecting and Enhancing the Landscape Character of Holme Valley.

Policy 2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Built Character of the Holme Valley and Promoting High Quality Design.

Policy 12 – Promoting Sustainability.

Supplementary Planning Guidance / Documents

House Extensions and Alterations SPD

National Planning Policy

Chapter 2 - Achieving sustainable development

Chapter 12 - Achieving well-designed and beautiful places

Chapter 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Legislation

The Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

The Town & Country Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Heritage

As set out above, 17 Town Gate is an unlisted two-storey dwelling and attached barn situated within the Upperthong Conservation Area and facing directly onto Town Gate.

The narrow street is surrounded on both sides by vernacular stone buildings and drystone walls and is characteristic of the type of linear

settlement found in the Holme Valley. Most of the buildings are cottages and farm buildings, with some dating back to at least the 18th century.

The historic Royal Oak Inn is situated directly to the west, and to the west of this is a historic footpath which leads south. Most of the rural landscape to the south of the historic settlement was built on during the late 20th and early 21st centuries, with housing developments constructed on the south facing hillside. A small area of green space, which is within the Conservation Area, survives to the south within the curtilage of the property and is in the same ownership. This area of land is held to make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area by retaining views of the historic settlement from the south, including a clear view from the adjacent public right of way.

The south facing rear elevations of the historic buildings along Town Gate are vernacular in style, with mullioned windows, stone elevations, and mostly linear stone slate pitched roofs, which all contribute to the character of the settlement. Single storey extensions have been constructed to the rear of several buildings along the row and some of these are considered to make a negative contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, including the existing white conservatory on the rear of 17 Town Gate. Despite this, the historic character and function of the buildings along Town Gate can still be understood, with their simple roof forms and vernacular materials and detailing surviving.

An assessment of the impact on the significance of designated heritage assets is contained within the section below.

Assessment

Taking into account the comments made by the Conservation Officer with regards to the two-storey rear extension that was proposed as part of the previous application (which led to an amendment to this element of the scheme), the owner of the property has now amended the proposals for a two-storey extension on this rear elevation.

The new scheme retains the design details of the approved single storey extension at ground floor level. However, the lean-to roof has been replaced by a first-floor bedroom, with a gable end and a pitched roof above which ties into the existing roof at right angles. Noting the Conservation Officer's previous comments in relation to the use of green oak, the proposed scheme now includes stonework to match existing, with the proposed new fenestration at first floor level matching the existing fenestration details on the host dwelling at first floor level in terms of size and design.

The only visual alteration to this rear façade (above and beyond that already permitted), when viewed across the open land from the south and from the public footpath, is held to be the introduction of a gable end to a pitched roof which, although unusual in the immediate vicinity, does not necessarily render it inappropriate. This feature is common throughout the local and wider Holme Valley area, and it is held that the overall high-quality design and materials of the proposed extension, plus the removal of the negative existing conservatory and the removal of significant elements of glazing and green oak that were present in the previous iteration of the scheme, mean that the proposed two storey extension at least preserves, if not in fact enhances, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Therefore, the proposed extension to the rear elevation will not result in a loss of character and legibility of the building. As such, it is held to comply with Policy LP35 of the Local Plan. It is also held to comply with Policy LP24, which requires development to respect or enhance the character of the townscape or the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area is characterised predominantly by natural stone, and as the proposed extension is to be built from this material, the proposed scheme is held to comply with Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act.

Chapter 16 of the NPPF requires great weight to be given to a heritage asset's conservation, with any harm requiring clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 208 of the NPPF requires any harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. As it can be reasonably concluded, for the reasons set out above, that the proposed scheme causes less than substantial harm to the significance of the Conservation Area, any less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

The Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan concluded in the Heritage and Character Assessment that the design, form and pattern of new development should respond to the historic local vernacular within the parish, using local materials. Development should also respond appropriately to context, taking into account the layout, scale, density and appearance (including materials) of neighbouring buildings. Specific consideration should be given to the Conservation Areas within the area to ensure the conservation and protection of key heritage assets.

It is considered that the public benefits of the scheme that outweigh any less than substantial harm to the significance of the Conservation Area are encapsulated by the potential visual impact of the proposed scheme

when viewed from the south, which is held to be much more visually appealing and sensitively designed than the approved single storey lean-to roof extension with rooflights. The proposed scheme responds appropriately to the local vernacular architectural style within the parish, in terms of design, scale, and materials, and also responds well to its context, reflecting the wider local character of the area.

Finally, it should be noted that approval was given for a similar scheme that included a gabled two storey rear extension on a nearby property at Cherry Tree Cottage, 35-37 Towngate, within the Conservation Area, adjacent to a listed building, and also has a south-facing rear elevation.

Conclusion

As recommended by the Conservation Officer as part of the previous application on this site, the re-design of the extension has omitted extensive glazing and green oak at first floor level and replaced it with natural materials and more sympathetic fenestration. As such, much more consideration has been given to the character of the building and the wider Conservation Area.

For the reasons set out above, the proposed development is considered to be in accordance with the NPPF, the Local Plan, and all relevant legislation and is therefore capable of approval, subject to any reasonable and necessary conditions.

