

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 October 2016

by Graham Chamberlain BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 14th October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Y2620/D/16/3157607

The Old Vicarage, Sustead Lane, Sustead, Norfolk NR11 8RU

- 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 and Mrs Bowland against the decision of North Norfolk District Council.
 - The application Ref PF/16/0497, dated 12 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 12 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is an orangery to the side elevation – 4450mm x 2600mm and associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The Old Vicarage is an attractive and historic property located next to the village church. The property is distinguished in part by its red brickwork, clay pan tiled roof and white painted timber windows. The appeal property is positioned so that the front elevation faces west thereby presenting a dutch-style gable end to the road, which is visible over the brick boundary wall. At ground floor level on the southern side elevation is a conservatory/greenhouse constructed from a white painted timber frame. The conservatory has a simple lean-to form and arched detailing to the window panes.
 4. The appeal scheme would involve the demolition of the existing conservatory and its replacement with an orangery. The proposed orangery would have a flat roof inset lantern. It would be constructed using an aluminium frame finished in an anthracite grey colour over a brick plinth. The ground level of the proposed orangery would be lowered relative to the existing conservatory and it would also be slightly longer and higher.
 5. The large roof lantern would be a bulky and unduly prominent addition to the orangery, which would also partially obscure the first floor window. Thus, the proposal would have an awkward visual connection to the main house. Moreover, the awkwardness of the orangery would be apparent in the
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juxtaposition of the box like form relative to the existing house and the design of the eaves, which would be higher than the existing boundary wall.

6. The combination of these factors would result in the proposed orangery having a discordant relationship with the existing house and boundary wall. This difficult visual relationship would be exacerbated by the grey aluminium frame, which would jar with the white painted timber finish of the existing windows. As a result, the proposed orangery would not be viewed as a natural and sensitive addition that sympathetically integrates with the host property. The proposed orangery would be visible from the road over the wall and through the gap in the wall currently filled by railings. It would also be visible in longer distance views across the field from the south east. I am therefore of the view that the discordant form and finish of the proposed orangery would harm the character and appearance of the area.
7. In coming to this view I note that the existing conservatory is in need of significant repairs and has limited head height. I also note that there has been some local support for the proposal. Nevertheless, the existing structure integrates positively with The Old Vicarage, whereas the proposed orangery would not, and therefore its existing limitations do not justify the overall harm.
8. The proposed orangery is not without merit. The subdivision of the glazing would echo that of the sash windows within the property. Moreover, the Norfolk red brick finish of the exterior walls would be left exposed and parts of the frame would be 'slim line'. The property has also evolved over time due to a number of alterations and accretions. However, none of these factors would outweigh the harm that would occur to the character and appearance of the area from the discordant form, design and position of the proposed orangery.
9. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, the proposal would be at odds with Policy EN4 of the North Norfolk Local Development Framework Core Strategy Incorporating Development Control Policies 2008, which requires development to be of a high standard of design and be suitable for its context. Aims consistent with Paragraph 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

10. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires me to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of St Peter and St Paul's Church, which is listed Grade II*. Both the Council and Historic England have concluded that the proposal would preserve its setting. I have no reason to disagree and thus share this view. However, this does not outweigh my findings on the main issue. The appellants have referred to other examples of orangeries built on similar properties. But the details of these are not before me so I can only afford this matter very limited weight. In any event, I have considered the proposal on its own merits.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

Graham Chamberlain
INSPECTOR