
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 November 2016

by S J Lee BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 23rd November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/A2470/D/16/3156488
48 High Street, Ketton, Rutland PE9 3TE

- 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 & Mrs Simon Smith against the decision of Rutland Council.
 - The application Ref 2016/0476/FUL, dated 12 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is two storey extension to form entrance hall, circulation, family room with bedroom and bathroom over and internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Ketton Conservation Area and the setting of 50 High Street.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a two storey dwelling with a concrete tile pitched roof and white rendered external walls. There is an existing single storey lean-to front extension that projects forward from the building line of the house and to the side of the dwelling. This would be replaced by the development. The site also includes a detached pitched roof stone garage. The extension would create a link between the garage and main dwelling. The site is within the Ketton Conservation Area (KCA) and adjacent to a Grade II listed building at 50 High Street. To the rear of the dwelling is a narrow strip of space which backs onto an open field.
 4. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas. Section 66(1) of the same act states that special regard should also be had to preserving the setting of listed buildings. These requirements are reflected in Paragraph 131 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which states that in determining planning applications, the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets should be taken into account.
 5. The main house is of a traditional style that is broadly in-keeping with that of the character of the surrounding area. The qualities of the building have been eroded to some extent by the use of render and the installation of leaded UPVC
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windows. However, while the dwelling is set back from the road and is screened to some extent by landscaping above the boundary wall, it still retains some prominence owing to its elevated position from the roadside. It can also be clearly seen through the vehicular and pedestrian accesses and also in glimpsed views through the boundary treatments.

6. High Street itself, with its predominance of traditional stone buildings running along the main lane through the settlement, is an important part of the significance of the KCA, reflecting both the historic settlement pattern and local vernacular. Notwithstanding the alterations that have taken place, the host dwelling still makes a positive contribution to this street scene and the overall character and significance of the KCA.
7. The extension would project further forward of the front building line than the existing lean-to extension and would be wider, linking into the side of the garage. The extension's roofline would extend out from the side of the host at a slightly lower height than the existing ridge and turn at a right angle, presenting a large gable to the roadside. This prominent feature would not complement the character or architecture of the host dwelling. While the gable would reflect the orientation of the garage, the resulting appearance of the double gable to the front and the stepping of both the height and building line would create a jarring and awkward relationship with the principle elevation of the house. The resulting form would appear somewhat disjointed and would significantly diminish the character of the main house.
8. This would be exacerbated by the variety of materials that would be used across the extended dwelling. To an extent, the use of white render already provides some variety to the street scene. However, the additional use of stone and timber cladding in the extension would further illustrate the lack of harmony and integration between the different elements of the building. The long, vertical windows proposed in the front and side of the extension would also differ considerably from those in the host dwelling and appear as unrelated and incongruous features. The extension would result in there being three clearly distinct elements which would not fit together in a coherent and sympathetic way. This would result in the extension itself becoming an unduly dominant and distracting feature on the street. These factors confirm my view that the extension would have a materially harmful impact on the host building and street scene.
9. While No 50 is also set back from the road behind mature landscaping, it can still be seen in glimpsed views between gaps in trees and hedgerow and through accesses. As with the appeal dwelling, this visibility will increase during winter months when the landscaping is less verdant. By virtue of this, and its overall imposing scale, the building is important to the character of the High Street. Although there is some degree of separation between No 48 and No 50, there are still locations where the buildings can be seen together, particularly around the junction with Bull Lane. In this regard, I consider the incongruous nature of development would also have a detrimental impact on the setting of the listed building.
10. Taken together, the scale, style, detailing and materials of the extension would result in a prominent, unsympathetic and incongruous form of development that would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the KCA and materially harm the setting of the neighbouring listed building. Accordingly,

there would be conflict with policies CS19 and CS22 of the Core Strategy (2011) and policies SP15 and SP20 of the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (2014) which, amongst other things, seek to conserve and enhance the quality and character of the historic environment and promote development which is sympathetic to its surroundings.

11. I consider the harm to the significance of the KCA and setting of the listed building would be 'less than substantial' in the context of paragraph 134 of the Framework. This requires any harm found to be weighed against the public benefits of the development.
12. In this case, the benefits would mainly be the provision of increased and improved living space for the occupants of the dwelling and thus are largely private in nature. There would be some benefit to the appearance of the KCA through the replacement of the UPVC windows, but this would not be reliant on the overall development. In addition, it has not been shown that the refurbishment or occupation of the dwelling is dependent on the proposed development or that this would be the only way in which the benefits, whether public or private, could be achieved. Therefore, I do not consider that the public benefits outweigh the harm identified and thus there would be also conflict with paragraph 134 of the Framework.

Other matters

13. The appellant has drawn my attention to other nearby schemes which he argues demonstrate that similar development has been permitted within the KCA. I had the opportunity to view the schemes referred to and am satisfied that they are sufficiently different in nature, and impact on the character and appearance of the area, to not be considered direct parallels to the scheme before me, either in terms of the type of development taking place or the impact on the KCA. I have also not been provided with the full details of these schemes so cannot come to any conclusions as to the consistency of the Council's approach. In any case, I have determined this appeal on its own merits.
14. I have noted the positive comments from neighbouring residents with regard to the quality of the scheme. However, these comments are not sufficient to outweigh my own concerns over the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the KCA.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S J Lee

INSPECTOR