
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 January 2017

by David Troy BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 3 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/J3015/W/16/3160434

Abel Collins Homes, Derby Road, Beeston, Nottinghamshire NG9 2TF

- 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 The United Charities of Abel Collins against the decision of Broxtowe Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/00083/FUL, dated 1 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 15 April 2016.
 - The development proposed is extension of meeting hall.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the meeting hall.

Reasons

3. The appeal site forms part of the Abel Collins Homes residential scheme set back from the main A52 Derby Road. The communal meeting hall comprises of a detached single storey red brick building with a tiled hipped roof and a small rear flat roofed extension centrally located within the housing scheme. The property is not listed nor within a Conservation Area. The neighbouring properties within the housing scheme are typically characterised by single storey bungalows predominantly built in red brick with pitched tiled roofs. These features give the area a strong unifying character and appearance.
 4. The proposal would entail the construction of two single storey side extensions to the west and east of the hall, set back from the front elevation and extending across the width of the building. A brick built lounge extension with a hipped roof would be constructed projecting out by about 5m from the west elevation of the building, with a new outside terraced area beyond. A timber clad kitchen extension with a flat roof would be constructed, projecting out by about 3.4m from the east elevation of the building.
 5. Whilst the proposed west extension would result in some harm to the original building through the loss of symmetry and the attractive western door surround feature, I consider that the roof design, the set back and the use of matching materials and fenestrations would ensure that the proposed west extension would sit relatively unobtrusively against the main form of the
-

original building. This would allow this element of the proposal to achieve an appropriate degree of subordination to the main building. As such, I consider the proposed extension would not significantly detract from the architectural integrity of the original building nor significantly harm the appearance of the building.

6. The flat roofed design, materials and the contemporary appearance of the proposed east extension, whilst modest in scale, would be very much at odds with the older more traditional character and appearance of the original building and many of the properties in the area. As such I consider that the proposed east extension, by virtue of its siting, design and choice of materials would result in an incongruous and out-of-keeping addition that would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the original building.
7. I have considered the appellant's comments regarding the design rationale behind the proposed east extension. Whilst the modest scale, low level design and the use of the materials would help to reduce the impact on the living conditions of the occupiers to the bungalow immediately to the north east of the proposal and the proportions of the timber clad extension would mirror to some degree the new timber framed sliding door to the west, these aspects do not overcome the adverse effects outlined above. I also note the appellant's comments regarding the alternative design solutions and the amendments discussed with the Council prior to the determination of the application. However, I can only consider this appeal on the basis of the proposals before me and the same details that were before the Council when it made its decision. I therefore accord these matters limited weight.
8. The appellant makes reference to the contemporary bungalows built at the rear of the Abel Collins Homes housing scheme in support of the proposal. This, however, is a terrace of existing dwellings rather than extensions to an existing non-residential building and have different development characteristics to the appeal scheme. They are a rare example of contemporary-styled buildings and are unrepresentative of the overall character and appearance of the site. I therefore accord them limited weight as a precedent in this case.
9. I have considered the appellant's comments regarding the context provided in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) for good design and that planning decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styling and should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative in design but I find that this proposal would not achieve the standards the Framework seeks.
10. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed east extension would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the meeting hall. The development conflicts with Policy 10 of the Broxtowe Aligned Core Strategy 2014 that seeks, amongst other things, to ensure that new development demonstrates a high standard of design that reinforces valued local characteristics and identity including its treatment of massing, scale, proportion, materials, architectural style and detailing. It would also not accord with the Framework that development should seek to secure a high quality of design (paragraph 17); to respect the local character (paragraph 58); and to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness (paragraph 60).

Other matters

11. I note that the appellant considers that the proposal would constitute a sustainable form of development. Sustainable development is identified as having social, economic and environmental roles in the Framework. I accept that the proposal would provide some social and economic benefits through the provision of an enlarged meeting hall for the Abel Collins Homes residential community in a cost effective way. However, whilst I note the appellant's view on the environmental benefits of the proposed sustainable design and use of materials, I find that the scheme's proposed east extension would harm the character and appearance of the original building.
12. Whilst I appreciate the need for expansion this does not outweigh my conclusions on the main issue. This harm would conflict with the environmental dimension of sustainable development and, in my view, would be sufficient to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the scheme's benefits. The proposal would not therefore amount to sustainable development in the terms of the Framework.

Conclusion

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

David Troy

INSPECTOR