
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 March 2017

by I Radcliffe BSc(Hons) MRTPI MCIEH DMS

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

Decision date: 31 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N4720/D/17/3168562

12 Springfield Place, Otley, West Yorkshire LS21 3JW

- 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 A E Hodgson against the decision of Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/07112/FU, dated 4 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 4 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is a conservatory to the front.
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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 Otley Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') is an important material consideration. Paragraph 132 of the Framework advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, such as a Conservation Area, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
 4. The appeal site is located within the Otley Conservation Area. In the exercising of planning functions the statutory test in relation to Conservation Areas is that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Policies P11 and P12 of the Leeds Core Strategy and policy HDG1 of the supplementary planning document 'Householder Design Guide' (SPD) are consistent with this test.
 5. In terms of assessing the significance of the Conservation Area and the contribution that the appeal property makes to it, I have taken into account the Otley Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA), which is supplementary planning guidance, the comments of the main parties and my observations during the site visit.
 6. The Conservation Area covers the town centre and its environs that contain well designed older buildings, a significant proportion of which are from the Victorian era. In the vicinity of the appeal site stone built Victorian terraced housing predominates. The architecture of the houses reflects the era in which they were built and the consistency of the terraces has created an attractive built environment. The significance of the Conservation Area is therefore architectural and historical.
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7. Springfield Place consists of two storey, stone built terraced houses that face each other. A narrow footway off Ilkley Road provides access between the inward facing dwellings and footways around the outside of Springfield Place provide access to the rear of the properties. The arrangement of the houses, together with their flat fronts and vertical emphasis of their doors and windows, has created an attractive regular rhythm of development.
8. No 12, in keeping with some of the other houses at the end of the Place, is wider than its neighbours and with its front door symmetrically positioned between tall windows on either side it has a particularly pleasing appearance. The appeal property and Springfield Place therefore make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
9. The proposed conservatory would be located on the front elevation of house. It is a feature of Springfield Place that the houses do not have front conservatories or extensions. Although mainly composed of glass the frame of the conservatory, regardless of colour or material, would have sufficient physical presence to disrupt the regular rhythm of development that characterises Springfield Place. Positioned towards the right hand side of the property it would clutter the front elevation, detracting from its quality and resulting in a loss of its symmetry.
10. UPVC porches are present to the rear elevations of two of the houses on Springfield Place. I recognise that doors within these elevations are used as the main entrance to the houses and that more people see the rear elevations than the front elevations because of the popularity of the rear footway. However, the rear elevations have a simpler, more utilitarian design than the front elevations. As a result, such development does not appear as out of context at the rear of the properties. Consequently, the existence of these features is a consideration of little weight in favour of the appeal.
11. Reference has been made to the long terrace on Piper Lane where some houses have enclosed glazed front porches that extend across the front of the property. I have not been provided with any further information regarding these developments. In any event, the fact that they have occurred over the years is not a reason on its own to support development that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. As a consequence, reference to these features has not altered my findings in relation to this issue.
12. For the reasons given above, I therefore find that the proposed development would have a significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and its significance. The harm caused by the proposed development to the significance of the Conservation Area as a whole would be less than substantial. In such circumstances paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') advises that the harm that would be caused should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
13. In accordance with the statutory duties described, I attach considerable importance and weight to the harm that would be caused to the Conservation Area. On the other side of the balance, the proposal by creating additional indoor space would create a larger dwelling. This would be of slight benefit to the housing stock in the area.
14. Taking these matters into account, my overall conclusion is that the public benefits of the proposal do not outweigh the demonstrable harm that would be caused to the Otley Conservation Area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to the Framework, as well as failing the statutory test. As such, it

would be contrary to policies P10, P11 and P12 of the Core Strategy, policies GP5 and BD6 of the Leeds Unitary Development plan (Review) (UDPR) and the SPD. Policy 10 of the Core Strategy and policies GP5 and BD6 of the UDPR require the protection of the character and appearance of a locality through high quality design that respects local design features.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, the appeal should therefore be dismissed.

Ian Radcliffe

Inspector