



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 January 2018

by Daniel Hartley BA Hons MTP MBA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 10 January 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/A2335/W/17/3181465

267-268 Marine Road Central, Morecambe, Lancashire LA4 5BX

- 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 Jason Slater against the decision of Lancaster City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/00735/FUL, dated 12 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 6 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is the replacement of a pitched roof with a shallow pitched roof and parapet wall to front elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether or not the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Morecambe Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is mid terraced and comprises an amusement arcade on the ground floor and residential accommodation on the upper floors. The property faces directly onto Morecambe Bay and is within the Morecambe Conservation Area (CA). Planning permission has already been approved to convert the building into apartments and this includes alterations to the roof of No 267 including the insertion of a roof dormer. I have been provided with a copy of the approved plans for this planning permission and I have taken these into account as part of the determination of this appeal.
4. Whilst there are a variety of ages and styles of property which exist in this part of the CA and along Marine Road Central, there is generally a consistency and rhythm to the height of the buildings at either two storeys or three storeys. It is evident that some of the buildings have been altered over the years, but nonetheless, and in the main, most of the windows within each of the terraced blocks are aligned with one another and many of the main roofs are sloped with some including imposing chimneys. The latter characteristics are particularly noticeable when walking along the promenade opposite the appeal site. Furthermore, a number of the buildings include bay windows adding a sense of grandeur to the area. Collectively, the aforementioned attributes add positively to the character and appearance of the CA.
5. Part of the appeal property (No 268) includes a projecting and rendered three storey front façade with a parapet roof. According to the Council, this was

"likely to have been carried out prior to the designation of the conservation area in 2003". Such development is in direct contrast to No 267 Marine Road Central which has a lower pitched roof and where the front wall is set back from the aforementioned development. It is proposed to almost replicate the design of the existing projecting and rendered front façade of No 268 Marine Road Central at No 267 Marine Road Central. This would increase the amount of residential accommodation relative to the existing planning permission for apartments.

6. When the building is considered as a whole it does not have any design symmetry for the reasons outlined above. When it is considered in isolation, the proposal would to some extent have the effect of creating a more symmetrical and cohesive building. However, in the context of the block of terraced properties, the existing projecting façade appears bulky and dominant and detracts from the otherwise design / scale consistency which exists within the group of properties. This existing adverse impact is particularly noticeable at the junction of Queen Street and Marine Road Central and from the promenade. The introduction of a very similar extension would exacerbate this existing negative impact to the detriment of the character and appearance of this part of the CA.
7. My above concerns would be compounded by the fact that No 267 would include windows which would not be directly aligned with those at No 268 and the rest of the terrace. There would be four floors of windows when most of the terrace has only three floors. This in itself would cause harm to the host property, the wider terrace and the overall character and appearance of the CA.
8. I acknowledge that planning permission has been approved for a dormer window within the existing roof slope of No 267. However, in contrast to the appeal proposal, this dormer would be set well back from the eaves and edges of the roof and would not appear dominant and intrusive when viewed from Marine Road Central and the promenade. In relative terms, I agree with the Council that the approved development constitutes a more sympathetic and acceptable form of development in this CA setting. The approved development would seek to retain the visibility of the sloping roof and the chimney which are prevalent and important features in the CA. I acknowledge the appellant's comment about the proposed development being recessed behind existing development, but I do not consider that this would sufficiently mitigate the identified harmful impacts.
9. In the context of Paragraphs 133 and 134 of the Framework, the harm to the significance of the CA would be less than substantial. However, I do not consider that there are any identified public benefits sufficient to outweigh that harm. I note the appellant's comment that there are issues with damp and that it is difficult to clear out the gutters. However, these are essentially private matters and may be capable of being addressed by means of alternative options. In any event, these are not matters which would justify allowing a proposal which would cause harm to the CA. I conclude that the proposal would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA and would not therefore accord with the design and conservation aims of the Framework and Policies DM31 and DM35 of the adopted Local Plan for Lancaster District Development Management DPD 2014.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons outlined above, and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Daniel Hartley

INSPECTOR