



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 July 2019

by D. Szymanski, BSc (Hons) MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16th August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/W3520/D/19/3228477

38 Cooper Road, Gosbeck, IP6 9SW

- 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 Colin Spreadbury against the decision of Mid Suffolk District Council.
 - The application Ref: DC/19/00055 dated 5 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 28 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as enlargement of first floor front dormer window to existing detached garage (re-submission of DC/18/01011 "New and enlarged dormers, erection of external stairway and internal alterations to garage to form first floor home office").
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The description from the planning application form is set out above, which differs from that set out in the appellant's appeal questionnaire and the Council's documents. Additionally, I note that the Council's delegated assessment makes various references to two dormer windows and a home office conversion, shown on the appellant's plan/drawing. There are also other internal and external details shown on the appellant's plan/drawing. Having sought the views of both parties, for the avoidance of doubt the proposed development is being considered as set out in the banner, as 'enlargement of first floor front dormer window to existing detached garage'.
3. The Council has stated that it has assessed the proposal as the installation of two enlarged dormers, a stair case and conversion of the garage. The appellant has referred to elements of the scheme shown on the submitted plan/drawing (other than the front dormer window) not requiring express planning permission. In the context of an appeal under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 this is not a matter for me to determine. Should the appellant wish, it is open to the appellant to have those matters determined under sections 191 or 192 of the Act, and any such application would be unaffected by the determination of this appeal.
4. The address is set out on the planning application form as 'Coopers Road' and set out in the appeal form as 'Cooper Road'. The correct address is 'Cooper Road', which I have used in the banner heading above.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the existing building and the area.

Reasons

6. The existing double garage appears to have been carefully designed in the general style of a small Suffolk barn/coach house, finished in black timber cladding over a red brick plinth, with a pantile pitched roof. The front comprises roughly square garage doors with a roughly square window to the east side, and a centred single pitched/gabled dormer window with an approximately square window opening. The rear pitched roof comprises a similar arrangement with the dormer window.
7. Whilst views of the proposed front dormer are largely screened to the rear and sides by hedgerows and trees and the dwelling, it is prominent from the frontage on Cooper Road. Whilst retaining a similar width of opening to the existing, the proposed dormer window would create an unusual elongated rectangular window opening that is almost twice as long as the existing dormers. This would be considerably different to, and out of character with existing window openings on the garage and first floor frontage of the cottage, such that it would detract from the host building. I acknowledge that the nearest other properties are some distance away and of varying styles, however, the host building has its own characteristic style and proportions, and the proposed dormer would be incongruous to this.
8. I note that the appellant has made efforts to reduce the effects of the dormer by recessing it into the roof. Whilst this reduces visibility of the glass when approaching the property from the sides, it does not mitigate the harm from the front of the building.
9. Therefore, for the reasons set out above I consider that the proposed development would be out of keeping with and harmful to the character and appearance of the host building and the area. This would be contrary to Policy FC1.1 of the Mid Suffolk District Core Strategy Focussed Review (2012), Policy CS5 of the Mid Suffolk District Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2008), and Policies GP1 and H18 of the Mid Suffolk Local Plan (1998). These policies require that development is of a high-quality design that is in keeping with, respects, preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the site and the surroundings. The proposed development would also be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework which requires that (amongst other things) development adds to the overall quality of an area and is sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

10. The appellant's statement references other developments in the general area (including one photograph), and companies that are understood to specialise in new build coach houses. I cannot comment on the company references provided, and I am unaware of the full circumstances surrounding each dormer example provided. Each proposal must be determined on the particular merits and impacts that would arise along with the individual circumstances involved.
11. The appellant has expressed some disappointment with the Council because of a perceived lack of communication, and because his understanding of why the

Council refused the current proposal. Should the appellant wish to pursue this matter then he should do so with the Council. Whilst I acknowledge (as explained by the appellant) that no objections have been received to the proposal, this does not diminish the harm I find.

Conclusion

12. Therefore, for the reasons set out above, and having regard to all the matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Dan Szymanski

INSPECTOR