



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 23 July 2019

by Tom Gilbert-Wooldridge BA (Hons) MTP MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 August 2019

Appeal A Ref: APP/J3530/W/18/3207634

Church Farm House, Victoria Road, Aldeburgh IP15 5EA

- 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 Carl Turpin against the decision of Suffolk Coastal District Council.
 - The application Ref DC/18/1145/FUL, dated 16 March 2018, was refused by notice dated 4 May 2018.
 - The development proposed is two proposed lean-to extensions to the utility and dining room of Church Farm House.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/J3530/Y/18/3207633

Church Farm House, Victoria Road, Aldeburgh IP15 5EA

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Carl Turpin against the decision of Suffolk Coastal District Council.
 - The application Ref DC/18/1146/LBC, dated 16 March 2018, was refused by notice dated 4 May 2018.
 - The works proposed are the same as Appeal A.
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Decisions

1. The appeals are dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue for both appeals is whether the proposal would preserve the Grade II listed building known as Church Farm House or any features of special architectural and historic interest it possesses.
3. The main issue for Appeal A only is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of Aldeburgh Conservation Area.

Reasons

Listed building

4. Church Farm House is listed Grade II and dates from circa 1830. It is a detached red brick property with a slate roof and sash windows. There is decorative stucco moulding above windows on the south (Victoria Road) and north elevations. The north elevation is visible from the cul-de-sac to the rear and has a simple appearance with a single window and a timber door with curved brick arch above. The L-shape plan form is still evident notwithstanding a recent single storey lean-to extension on the front elevation. The size and recessed footprint of the extension means it does not detract from the overall

form of the property or the space between the building and boundary wall. The property's architectural detailing along with its historic interest as part of the Victorian development of Aldeburgh contribute greatly to the special interest and significance of the listed building.

5. The proposed extensions would be modest in scale and would utilise materials to match the existing property. However, the extension to the utility room would result in the loss of historic brickwork at ground floor and the timber entrance door. It would also disrupt the simplicity of the north elevation. The extension to the dining room/hall would not affect any historic fabric but would result in the further erosion of L-shape plan form at ground floor and reduce the amount of space between the building and boundary wall. The extensions would not be visible from Victoria Road, but would be seen from the cul-de-sac and a pedestrian footpath between the two roads even allowing for boundary walls and planting. Nevertheless, the extent of public visibility is not necessarily determinative when assessing the effect of proposals on a listed building.
6. I note that consents were granted in 2014 for a single storey rear extension linking the house to the modern garage. From the evidence before me, the L-shape plan form of the historic property would remain more evident and the extension would be less prominent and set within the rear garden rather than at the front or side. Consent to convert the garage into a residential annexe is also noted, but this does not appear to have involved any extension to the historic property. Therefore, neither consents alter my findings with regards to the proposed extensions. Moreover, each case should be assessed on its own merits, and so examples of extensions to listed buildings elsewhere in the district carry little weight.
7. The extensions would have a negative effect on the listed building and result in harm to its significance. Although the harm would be less than substantial and no greater than moderate in magnitude due to the extent of changes, paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires such harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme. There is no guarantee that the 2014 consent would not be implemented, nor has it been demonstrated that its implementation would be more harmful than the proposal. Thus, little weight can be attached to this as a public benefit. There are no public benefits before me that are sufficient to outweigh the harm. Therefore, the proposal in both appeals would not preserve the special interest of the listed building and would be contrary to the NPPF.

Conservation Area

8. Aldeburgh Conservation Area contains the oldest surviving part of the historic town running along the seafront, but it also extends inland along Church Walk and Victoria Road. This character area encompasses the parish church and a number of larger Victorian and Edwardian properties on one of the main accesses to and from the seafront. Thus, the area and Church Farm House itself make an important contribution to the character, appearance and significance of the conservation area.
9. As with listed buildings, the extent of public visibility in conservation areas is not necessarily decisive. The extensions would not be visible from Victoria Road, but would negatively alter the appearance and form of the property and would be seen from viewpoints to the side and rear. As one of the notable buildings in this part of the conservation area, there would be harm to the

significance of this designated heritage asset. The harm would be less than substantial and only modest due to the amount of change within the conservation area. However, as with the previous main issue, there would be insufficient public benefits to outweigh the harm. Therefore, the proposal in Appeal A would not preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and would be contrary to paragraph 196 of the NPPF.

Other Matters

10. The apparent lack of communication between the Council and appellant at the application stage and any issues relating to pre-application engagement are procedural matters that have no bearing on the planning and heritage merits of these appeals.

Conclusions

11. For the above reasons, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that both appeals should be dismissed.

Tom Gilbert-Wooldridge

INSPECTOR