



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 May 2020

by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 June 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/V2825/W/19/3241756

5-11 Horseshoe Street, Northampton NN1 1TB

- 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 Alex Putjatins against the decision of Northampton Borough Council.
 - The application Ref N/2019/0486, dated 10 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 24 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'loft conversion of a residential building to create 4 additional rooms and a kitchen.'
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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 area with specific regard to the setting of a listed building.

Reasons

3. The appeal building is two storey with a gable roof. It is in a visually prominent position abutting the back edge of and facing west towards Horseshoe Street. It is of a simple design and finished in brick and slate. The evidence suggests it was historically a row of smaller shop units with accommodation on the first floor, later one larger retail unit. Elements of the historic use can still be read despite external changes that have accompanied its current use as a House in Multiple Occupation. The appeal building is connected to a church to the south which is of roughly the same proportions and height but has a flat roof.
4. To the rear of the appeal building, and sat at roughly right angles to it, is a large and imposing early Victorian grade II listed ironstone building. Known as the former All Saints School, it has been more recently used as a nightclub. It is in the Tudor style with a strong symmetry to its design and shape and faces north. It is a good quality example of its type and of noticeable substance. It has a strong street scene presence by virtue of an open space (currently used as a private car park) to its frontage. It is accessed by a set of stone steps to a central front door.
5. The smaller stature of the appeal site and the building to which it is attached are clearly subservient to the listed building, reinforcing its dominance in and as focal point of the street scene. The flank elevation of the listed building is

clearly identifiable from the street, behind and above the appeal building. The subservience of the appeal building, and the simplicity of the traditional roof form can also be viewed from the street on approach to the listed building from the north. The scale and design of the appeal building and the same of the listed building make a positive contribution to the street scene and form the building's setting.

6. The proposed development would increase the height of the building only marginally but the use of a non characteristic and bulky mansard style roof with a number of wide flat roof dormer windows would not reflect its more traditional and simple proportions. It would accordingly jar with them to the detriment of its appearance. The increase in the perceptible scale of the appeal building and overall awkwardness and prominence of its resulting design would accordingly impinge on the setting of the adjacent listed building. Competing for visual dominance in the street scene.
7. The harm to the character and appearance of the area would result in the same to the setting of a listed building. Given the degree and extent of the proposed works in context, I would consider this harm to be less than substantial. As per paragraph 196 of the Framework¹, I am required to balance the harm against the public benefits of the proposal. The appeal scheme would provide additional accommodation within the building which accordingly would ensure further housing provision in the area. I attach some weight to these benefits, but they would be insufficient to make the scheme acceptable against the great weight I attach to the conservation of the listed building in question as per paragraph 193 of the Framework.
8. The appeal scheme would therefore be unacceptable for the character and appearance of the area and cause harm to the setting of a grade II listed building. This would conflict with the aims of section 16 of the Framework, Policy 1 of the CAAP² and Policies H1, S10 and BN5 of the Local Plan³. Amongst other things, these policies seek to ensure that new development has regard to the existing character of the local area, achieves the highest standards of sustainable design that contributes positively to the character of an area and conserves and enhances designated heritage assets and their setting.

Other Matters

9. The photographic evidence submitted by the appellant points to a number of examples of more modern buildings, differing roof forms and some lower quality architecture that contributes to something of a 'mixed bag' of buildings and built form in the immediate area.
10. Be this as it may, each development proposal is considered on its own merits and examples such as those cited is not a sufficient justification to allow one that would in itself be harmful to the character and appearance of an area and specifically harmful to the setting of a listed building. Indeed, I feel that the number of arguably lower quality structures in the immediate area leans me more towards retaining what traditional and much higher quality examples that remain rather than accepting further degradation of them.

¹ The National Planning Policy Framework 2019

² Northampton Central Area Action Plan 2013

³ West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) 2014

Conclusion

11. I have had regard to other matters that have been raised by third parties, but it is for the reasons I have explained above that the appeal is dismissed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR