



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 May 2020

by Peter Mark Sturgess BSc (Hons), MBA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: Tuesday, 30 June 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Y2620/D/20/3245663

6 Carr Lane, Overstrand, Cromer NR27 0PS

- 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 and Mrs David Walter against the decision of North Norfolk District Council.
 - The application Ref PF/19/1540, dated 11 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 7 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is a dormer window to accommodate en-suite facility for disabled owner.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Overstrand Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The site lies in an elevated position within the Overstrand Conservation Area (CA). It is comprised of a pitched roof bungalow, with its gable parallel to the road, surrounded by garden and parking areas. It is a modern bungalow with brick walls and a concrete tile roof. The dormer is already in place, having been the subject of a retrospective planning application. Next door, to the north, lies a similar bungalow with a pitched roof and gable parallel to the road. There are no roof additions apparent on this building.
4. The CA comprises part of the seaside village of Overstrand which is characterised by a mixture of architectural styles and densities. The development in the CA slopes gently down to the sea from higher inland areas. The entrances to the CA from the Cromer/Mundesley Road are characterised by development that is less dense than that clustered along the seafront, north of the High Street. This allows views in this area along the sides of the buildings into the gardens and vegetation beyond. Within the CA there are a variety of buildings from the traditional, constructed of flint, to more modern buildings. The predominant roof type is either gabled or hipped. The appeal building is a mid/late twentieth century bungalow with no specific architectural interest. It sits in a large garden and is of no greater prominence in the CA than other buildings in the locality. In this respect, in its original unaltered form, it has a neutral effect on the character or appearance of the CA.

5. The appeal development is a flat roof dormer window which is located approximately halfway along the northern roof slope. It is a prominent feature when viewed from the street, especially from the north and east. The dormer appears as a large and incongruous appendage to the roof slope of a modest bungalow, as it extends from the wall plate to the ridge, is clad with bright white plastic and its angular shape with a flat roof and horizontal window does not relate sympathetically to the existing bungalow or the street as a whole. It has the appearance of a white plastic box appended to the slope of the roof. I consider that the dormer has an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the Overstrand CA in that it introduces an alien feature that is not typical of bungalows in the locality by reason of its design, shape, the materials from which it is constructed and its position on the roof. I therefore find that the dormer fails to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Overstrand CA and give this considerable importance and weight in this decision.
6. The appellant has stated in support of the appeal that his lack of mobility due to a medical condition requires him to have toilet facilities next to his bedroom on the upper floor of the bungalow. Whilst I give this matter some weight in this appeal, I do not consider it sufficient to outweigh the adverse impact the dormer has on the character and appearance of the CA, as there appears to be other ways of providing for the appellant's needs given the size of the bungalow and the plot within which it sits, which would not have an adverse impact on the CA.
7. The appellant has provided examples of flat roof dormers in the Overstrand CA. I have taken these examples into account in this decision and find that they are not directly comparable to the dormer at issue in this case. They appear to be either designed so that they don't extend from ridge to wall plate and have traditional vertical emphasis windows, they are in locations which are not prominent from the street or street scene and appear to be off private roads or not prominent from the street and set behind existing garages and sheds. I consider given the position of the dormer and its prominence when viewed from the street, that even if it were clad with materials to match the existing roof, as suggested by the appellant, it would still remain an incongruous feature that would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the CA by reason of its size, shape and position on the roof.
8. The development plan for the area includes, 'The North Norfolk Local Development Framework Core Strategy – Incorporating Development Control Policies' from September 2008 (CS). Policies EN4 (Design) and EN8 (Protecting and enhancing the historic environment) are relevant to this appeal. EN4 requires, amongst other things, all development to be designed to a high quality. It further states that design which fails to have regard to local context and does not preserve or enhance the character and quality of an area will not be acceptable. EN8 of the CS aims to protect the historic environment from developments that would harm its character and appearance. In view of my findings above, I find that this proposal conflicts with these policies.
9. Paragraph 193 of the Framework requires when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. This should be irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm. In this case I find that the development will lead to less

than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset and in these circumstances Paragraph 196 of the Framework requires that this harm be weighed against the public benefit of the proposal. I consider there are minimal if any public benefits of the proposal defined in the appeal. As a consequence, the public benefits arising from the development would not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the CA I have identified.

Conclusion

10. I find that having regard to all matters before me, including the need to have regard to the statutory duty set out in Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the provisions of the development plan, when taken as a whole, that the appeal should be dismissed.

Peter Mark Sturgess

INSPECTOR