



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 9 March 2021

by **Bhupinder Thandi BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 March 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/V2825/D/20/3262857

22 Manor Road, Kingsthorpe, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN2 6QJ

- 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 Miss L Poingdestre against the decision of Northampton Borough Council.
 - The application Ref N/2020/0829, dated 17 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 12 October 2020.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The development includes the installation of rooflights in the front roof slope. The reasons for refusal on the Council's decision notice indicate that the rear dormer window is the matter in dispute. I have no reason to disagree with the Council's conclusion that the rest of the proposed development is acceptable in planning terms. My reasoning below therefore relates to the dormer window.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the area and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Kingsthorpe High Street/Manor Road Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a two storey mid terrace dwelling located within a residential area and within a CA. Despite minor alterations in the form of rooflights the roofs of properties in the street are largely unaltered and their simple form positively contribute to the traditional appearance of dwellings in the area.
5. The proposed dormer window would lack architectural subtlety and would not be sympathetic to the appearance of the host building. Its overall width combined with its height very close to the ridge would result in a structure that unacceptably dominates the roof. The dormer window would result in a large and bulky feature being unduly prominent and incongruous. It would significantly disrupt the simple form and appearance of roofs in the terrace. As such, the proposed development would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area and the CA.

6. Albeit localised the impact on the CA would be harmful. Whilst the harm I have identified would not result in substantial harm, it would still result in harm that requires clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including where appropriate securing its optimum use.
7. Based on the evidence before me no public benefits have been presented and taking into consideration the points above the harm to the CA would clearly outweigh the public benefits of the proposal. The proposed development would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the CA.
8. The proposed development is therefore contrary to Policies BN5 and S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan Part 1 (2014) which, amongst other things, require developments to sustain and enhance heritage features, be sympathetic to locally distinctive design styles and to protect, conserve and enhance the built environment and heritage assets.
9. It would also be contrary to saved Policies E20, E26 and H18 of the Northampton Local Plan (1997) which, amongst other things, requires new extensions to be in keeping with the appearance and character of the original dwelling, to adequately reflect the character of its surroundings and for developments to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas. It would also conflict with the Framework.

Other matters

10. I note the appellant's comments in relation to a nearby dormer window. However, I have not been made aware of the individual circumstances that led to it being considered acceptable by the Council. In any case, every appeal must be considered on its own merits, as I have done in this case. The presence of another dormer window in the area does not justify the harm that I have identified.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above the appeal does not succeed.

B Thandi

INSPECTOR