
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 November 2021

by David Troy BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/U2805/D/21/3275800

4 Caistor Road, Gretton NN17 3DL

- 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 Robert Newby against the decision of Corby Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00499/DPA, dated 12 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 5 March 2021.
 - The development proposed is conversion of existing garage into annex accommodation; the erection of a ground floor link block to the main dwelling; erection of a rear ground floor extension with connecting corridor to main dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr Robert Newby against Corby Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the area, including whether it would preserve or enhance the Gretton Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a detached two storey dwelling with a detached garage within the CA. The traditional stone constructed property has a simple pleasing design with stone quoin details and a gabled pitched clay tiled roof.
5. Although there is some variation in the design, style and age of the other properties along Caistor Road, it is characterised by large detached properties in relatively spacious landscaped plots set back from the road behind stone boundary walls and mature frontage planting that gives the area a distinctly rural open character and feel. Buildings in the CA, despite some variations, are constructed from a similar palette of colours and materials which positively contribute to its character. The significance of these buildings and features to the CA can be readily appreciated within the immediate vicinity of the site.
6. The proposal would involve the construction of a single storey flat roofed extension to the side and rear of the main house with a linked extension to the garage that would to be converted into annex accommodation. A flat roof

dormer extension would be built across the rear of the garage that would be inset from the edges and eaves of the roof and set down below the ridge line of the converted garage building.

7. Although the proposed extensions would not appear overlarge, relative to the overall plot size, the scale and form of the proposed single storey flat roofed linked extension to the side and rear of the main house would nevertheless still be a significant addition relative to the main property. Whilst it would be set down with a flat sedum green roof, the proposed scale and form of the extension combined with the awkward design and bulkiness of the large flat roof dormer extension over the rear of the converted garage would appear very much at odds with the traditional form and appearance of the host property.
8. These shortcomings are exacerbated by the proposal's position, which would be visible from a number of public vantage points along Caistor Road. The contrasting use of timber cladding materials contribute to the overall scale of the rear dormer extension, giving it particular prominence in relation to its surroundings. The proposed single storey extension and dormer roof extension, by virtue of their scale, siting and design, would fail to achieve an appropriate degree of subordination to the host property and would detract from the architectural integrity of the host property. As such, I consider that the proposed extensions would result in incongruous and out-of-keeping additions that would cause unacceptable harm to the host property and the area.
9. I have considered the appellant's arguments that the design and layout of the proposed extensions and alterations has been carefully considered and redesigned in response to the previously dismissed scheme at the property¹. Whilst the use of matching materials and fenestrations would assist in integrating the proposed extensions with the host property, these aspects do not overcome the adverse effects outlined above. As such, I consider that the proposed development would adversely harm rather than positively contribute to the character and appearance of the host property and the area.
10. Given the location of the appeal site within the CA, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. I consider that the single storey extension and dormer roof extension, by virtue of their scale, siting and design, would have a negative material impact and would fail to preserve or enhance the CA.
11. Given the modest scale of the proposed development, the harm would be less than substantial but in accordance with paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework, that harm should be weighed against any public benefits to the proposal. I note the appellant's desire is to provide additional living accommodation at the host property and secure its optimum viable use. However, I find insufficient public benefit arising from this proposal to offset the identified harm to which I attach significant weight.
12. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area, including the Gretton Conservation Area. It would be contrary to Policies 2 and 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2016 which, amongst other things, require development to conserve and enhance heritage significance,

¹ 20/00266/DPA and APP/U2805/D/20/3263314

complement their surrounding historic environment, respond to the site's immediate and wider context and local character.

Other Matters

13. I have considered the appellant's comments regarding the family's personal circumstances and the benefits arising from the proposed additional annex accommodation. I have considerable sympathy for the appellant's circumstances. However, the courts have generally taken the view that planning is concerned with land use in the public interest. Although personal circumstances can sometimes justify a personal or temporary permission, that would not be appropriate here where a permanent structure is intended. There is insufficient justification for the scale and form of the extensions proposed.
14. I have noted the other developments in the area drawn to my attention by the appellant's. However, the residential extensions and alterations and various materials used on the properties in the surrounding area have different development and locational characteristics to the appeal scheme. In any event, each proposal falls to be assessed primarily on its own merits and I am unaware of the full circumstances associated with these other cases.
15. I have considered the appellant's comments regarding the lack of formal objections from the neighbours or third parties to the appeal proposal. Whilst this maybe so, this does not preclude the proper planning assessment of the impact of the proposal on the host property and the area and is not a determinative factor on its own.
16. I have noted the issues raised by the appellant regarding the way in which the application was processed by the Council. However, these are a material consideration to which I can attach only limited weight in making this decision.
17. I note the appellant's comments regarding the various benefits arising from the proposal including the scheme's high quality design and to create additional accommodation to meet the needs of the appellant. While I have given them some weight, these benefits would not be sufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified. For all these reasons, there are no other material considerations to outweigh the development plan conflicts identified.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Troy

INSPECTOR