

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 February 2022

by P Eggleton BSc(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7TH March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/G2625/D/21/3289778

1c Telegraph Lane East, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 4AL

- 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 Kevin Kemp against the decision of Norwich City Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00969/F, dated 7 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 4 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is demolition of garage and living room; extension in same location of demolition (to side of house) extension is two storey with sloping roof.
-

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 conservation area.

Reasons

3. The proposal would result in the removal of the existing single storey side extension which currently provides a garage, storage and living room. This would be replaced by a two storey extension which would be set away from the side boundary. The property is located within the Thorpe Ridge Conservation Area. Although the conservation area covers a wide area, this part of it is generally made up of low density suburban housing set on tree lined roads. It is the trees, hedges and garden landscaping that contribute most to the significance of this particular area. The surrounding houses generally sit unobtrusively within the landscaping setting.
 4. The appeal property is slightly at odds with the prevailing character in that it has a high wooden frontage fence and no longer benefits from vegetation within its frontage. Although the dwelling is set back and screened to some extent by the high fence, the lack of vegetation ensures that the built form is more dominant within the street scene. As the high timber fencing is also at odds with the general appearance of property frontages, this also increases the prominence of the site overall.
 5. The existing dwelling is of a simple design. The single storey extension that would be removed is not a positive feature but it sits relatively unobtrusively
-

alongside the main dwelling and it is subservient to it. In views over the high fence, it is not generally visible and the space above it provides a gap between the neighbouring houses at roof level, with views to trees beyond. The proposal, being two storey and with an angled roof, would become a much more dominant feature.

6. The design would jar with the simple form of the dwelling. It would fail to respect the design and proportions of the house and would dominate it. The design and overall composition would not be of a quality that would justify such dominance and distinctiveness. The opposite would be the case, it would undoubtedly appear as an incongruous addition, dominating the space between these dwellings. It would detract from the appearance of the property. As it would be visible above the high wooden fence, it would detract from the appearance of the site overall. Although I note the appellant's contentions with regard to the quality of the design, I find that it would represent poor design in this particular context. It would also harm the character and appearance of the conservation area.
7. Given the design concerns and the negative impact the proposal would have on the character of the area, it would be contrary to Policy DM3(f) of the adopted Development Management Policies Local Plan 2014 (LP) as it would be a dominant and incongruous extension. The policy specifically seeks to avoid such additions. It would also fail to have regard to the wider character of the conservation area resulting in conflict with the heritage requirements of LP Policy DM9.
8. The *National Planning Policy Framework* is clear that any harm to a heritage asset, such as a conservation area, should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The harm to the conservation area would be less than substantial, as described in paragraph 134 of the *Framework*.
9. The proposal would result in economic activity that would contribute to the economy and to local employment. This is a public benefit which I afford limited weight given the scale of the works. The proposal would offer improved accommodation for the appellant. I acknowledge the description of the existing extension and its poor construction. Improvements with regard to its thermal qualities in particular, would offer some public benefits. It is also suggested that considerable weight should be given to the modernisation of the property and the provision of a family appropriate home. With regard to public benefits, I afford very limited weight to these matters as improvements could be achieved using appropriate designs and without harm to the conservation area. These benefits do offer some limited weight with regard to the overall balance.
10. Overall, the public benefits of this proposal would not outweigh the harm to the conservation area and the proposal would therefore be at odds with the heritage requirements of the *Framework*. It would also conflict with its design objectives. As the LP design policy in particular is entirely consistent with the objectives of the *Framework*, I afford it full weight. As the matters put forward in support of the proposal do not outweigh my concerns or the conflict with the development plan or the *Framework*, I dismiss the appeal.

Peter Eggleton
INSPECTOR