



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 February 2022

by Benjamin Clarke BA (Hons.) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8th February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/J0540/D/21/3285965

44 Church Street, Werrington, Peterborough PE4 6QE

- 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 Mrs Alison Carroll against the decision of Peterborough City Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00368/HHFUL, dated 11 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 8 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is the replacement of existing wooden front door to solidor composite door.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council amended the description of the proposed development from 'replacement of existing front door under Article 4 Direction. Application is made due to door being in poor condition along with no draught, rain or noise protection from road. Also, our 85 year-old Father lives in property and he is unable to unlock door due to age and swelling of the door so has to use back door which in the event of fire would prove problematic for him or anyone else in property' to 'replacement of existing wooden front door to solidor composite door'.
3. I consider that the amended description represents a more concise description of the proposed development and have therefore proceeded on this basis.

Main Issue

4. The main issue relevant to this appeal is the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the Werrington Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site contains a dwelling constructed to a traditional design and from a historically sympathetic palette of materials, including brickwork and a pantile roof. This is supplemented by a wooden front door and wooden windows. The appeal site is within the Werrington Conservation Area (the CA). For the purposes of this appeal, the significance of which, is defined by the presence of traditional styles of architecture. In particular, buildings are most typically constructed from stone with wooden doors and window frames.
6. The proposed development would result in the replacement of the wooden front door with one constructed from a composite material. In result, this would

- create a modern insertion into the building's historic form of architecture. In addition, the door that is currently installed is complementary towards the fenestration and window frames that are present within the dwelling.
7. This would be eroded by the proposed new front door, which would be clearly constructed from materials that would be of a divergent appearance to the traditional palette currently present on the site and elsewhere within the vicinity of the appeal site.
 8. I note that the proposed door would feature a wood grain pattern and be of a similar colour to the window frames. However, the development would be constructed from a perceptibly different material to that which is common within the surrounding area. Therefore, this does not overcome my previous concerns.
 9. In result the proposed development would conflict with the historically traditional styles of architecture and materials which are a feature of the appeal site and its surroundings. Furthermore, this would erode the relationship between doors and windows that is currently a feature of the front elevation of the dwelling. This would render the proposed development an incongruous addition to the building.
 10. In addition, the appeal site is close to a large church. In result, the appeal site and the proposed development would be sited within a prominent location at the centre of the CA. Therefore, the erosion of the CA's character would be readily apparent.
 11. By reason of the positioning of the appeal site combined with the pattern of development in the surrounding area and its topography, the proposed new front door would be readily perceptible from different viewpoints in the surrounding area. This would render the proposal a strident addition to the vicinity.
 12. My attention has been drawn to some other doors within the surrounding area. I do not have the full information regarding their planning circumstances, which lessens the weight that I can attribute to them. Nonetheless, these are generally located in less prominent locations than the proposal before me.
 13. Furthermore, the prevailing character within the immediate vicinity of the appeal site is the presence of wooden doors. This defining characteristic would be eroded by the proposed development.
 14. In addition, existing doors in conjunction with the appeal proposal would result in a significant erosion of the area's character. In consequence, the presence of composite doors elsewhere does not overcome my previous concerns.
 15. The proposed development would result in improvements to matters including security, energy efficiency and the living conditions of occupiers of the dwelling and their visitors. Whilst these are matters of note, there are only some of all the points that must be considered and therefore do not outweigh my previous concerns.
 16. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the CA. The development, in this regard, would conflict with the requirements of Policies LP16 and LP19 of the Peterborough Local Plan (2019). Amongst other matters, these seek to ensure

that new developments respect the context of the site and surrounding area; and respect, and enhance or reinforce where appropriate, the local character and distinctiveness of the area in which it would be situated, particularly in areas of high heritage value.

Other Matter

17. The appellant has raised concerns regarding the manner in which the planning application was determined by the Council. However, in considering this appeal, I have limited my considerations to the planning matters before me.

Planning Balance

18. The harm that would occur to the character and appearance of the CA would not be severe and therefore it would be 'less than substantial' within the meaning of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Paragraph 202 of the Framework requires such harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
19. The proposed development would generate some economic benefits arising from the works being undertaken. However, these benefits would be limited due to the scale of the development and also of a time-limited duration. Therefore, I can only attribute the public benefits a limited amount of weight.
20. Therefore, when giving significant importance and weight to the special attention I must pay to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the CA, I find that the harm that would arise from the proposal would not be outweighed by its limited public benefits. Accordingly, there would be a conflict with Paragraph 200 of the Framework as harm to designated heritage assets would not have clear and convincing justification.

Conclusion

21. The proposed development would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the CA. The scheme would therefore conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations, including the Framework, that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the preceding reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Benjamin Clarke

INSPECTOR