
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 April 2022

by John Wilde CEng MICE

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/W3330/D/21/3288949

18 High Street, Wiveliscombe, Taunton, Somerset TA4 2JK

- 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 B Salmine against the decision of Somerset West and Taunton Council.
 - The application Ref 49/21/0060, dated 15 October 2021, was refused by notice dated 8 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is a front porch.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:-
 - a) Whether or not the proposed development would conserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Wiveliscombe Conservation Area.
 - b) The effect of the proposed development on the setting of nearby listed buildings.

Reasons

Effect on the conservation area

3. The appeal building is an end of terrace rendered property situated at the southern end of the High Street. The front of the property abuts a narrow concrete/shingle strip which in turn is set directly behind the footway. The High Street lies within the Wiveliscombe Conservation Area (CA), and section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
4. The proposed development would result in a gabled porch being built over the front door. This would have a slate roof which would be supported on a green oak frame set on cast concrete saddle stones.
5. Whilst the windows of the shop at No 14 do project slightly forward of the front elevation, none of the other properties on the west side of the street have a protruding porch. The result of this is a uniform and coherent appearance to the front elevations of the properties.

6. The proposed porch would be incongruous in terms of both its design and materials, green oak not being a material that features elsewhere in the High Street. This cannot be construed as either conserving or enhancing the conservation area, and therefore harm would occur to the significance of the CA. I consider that this harm would be less than substantial.
7. Paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) indicates that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset then the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In this case there are no public benefits.
8. It follows that conflict would occur with policy CP8 of the Taunton Deane Core Strategy. This policy seeks to ensure, amongst other things, that the historic environment is conserved or enhanced and that development proposals that harm the interest of the historic environment are not permitted.
9. My attention has been drawn to two porches to properties on the east side of the street. One of these is set above stone steps and a stone plinth whilst the other is set back from the rear of the footway. Both however are constructed in materials and colours that complement the respective host properties. To my mind neither of these can be taken as a compelling precedent for allowing the present appeal.
10. I also note that appeal property previously had a porch. However, this would appear to have been a simple flat roof with supports more or less integral to the front elevation of the property, similar to several others in the High Street. Its previous existence does not therefore lead me to arrive at a different conclusion.

Setting of listed buildings

11. Two properties on the east side of the High Street are Grade II listed, these being Nos 15 and 17. I consider that any harm caused to the significance of the CA would also have a detrimental effect on the setting of these listed buildings, and this in itself would also cause conflict with policy CP8.

Conclusion

12. For the above reasons, and having taken into account all other matters raised, including the lack of objection from the parish council, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

John Wilde

INSPECTOR