



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 April 2023

by P B Jarvis BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 April 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/R3515/D/22/3313015

24 Park Road, Ipswich IP1 3SU

- 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 Alfred Alty against the decision of Ipswich Borough Council.
 - The application Ref IP/22/00764/FUL, dated 30 August 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 October 2022.
 - The proposed development is a single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the Park Conservation Area and the setting of the adjoining Christchurch Park Registered Park and Garden.

Reasons

3. The appeal site consists of a large Victorian 'villa' set within a substantial plot set back from the Park Road frontage behind a red brick wall. The front elevation of the property facing Park Road appears to have been altered from its original form with a single storey addition to one side of the central front door which rather unbalances its appearance. There are sash windows to the ground and first floor to the left-hand side with decorative trellis over the ground floor window and central door. The rear façade, which is more elaborate, faces towards Christchurch Park. It has retained its original form and symmetrical appearance with angled bay windows to ground and first floor with central doorway with distinctive decorative arch above. However, a small, centrally positioned conservatory has been added which encloses the doorway and arch above and the first angled window of the bays either side.
4. Park Road is characterised by similar large late Victorian and Edwardian properties of individual but distinctive design though displaying coherence in the use of red brick elevations and clay tile roofs. On the southern side, along which the appeal site is located, they have substantial rear gardens which back onto Christchurch Park, a Grade II Registered Park and Garden.
5. The wider conservation area is characterised by similar Victorian and Edwardian properties. The Council's Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (1994) (CAAMP) notes that the area is considerably enhanced by a large number of buildings of special local interest, including some in Park Road, noteworthy within Ipswich. The CAAMP goes on to note that most are

representative of the Victorian and Edwardian era, but some notable houses were also designed in the 1920's by prominent local architects. The CAAMP makes specific reference to the late Victorian and Edwardian development on Park Road within its historic development section which it describes as grand architect designed houses largely built over the period 1894-99 on some of the highest ground in the area. It goes on to refer to the houses on the south side which commanded magnificent uninterrupted views over Christchurch Park and the town centre below and thus establishing the structure and character of the area.

6. The appeal site lies in the Park Road identity area and the CAAMP notes *"Formerly known as Boundary Road, Park Road was laid out to connect the radial roads of Henley Road and Westerfield Rad as a means of crossing the town at the head of Christchurch Park but avoiding the town centre."* This section also refers to No. 24 Park Road, mainly describing its Park Road facing elevation. Christchurch Park is a separate identity area and is described as a focal point for the surrounding Victorian development and the most significant landscape in the town. The development of housing in Park Road from 1896 to 1899 along the northern boundary of the park is noted. Appendix 1 of the CAAMP documents the listed buildings in the area and those on the local list. It does not include the property on the appeal site.
7. The Council suggests that the more balanced and symmetrical appearance of the rear façade which faces towards the registered park is of significance reflecting the status of those who occupied the plots on this side of Park Road and is of importance to the narrative of the dwelling. This accords with the character description provided within the CAAMP and it seems to me that the rear elevation of the dwelling and its outward facing relationship with the adjoining park is an important part of the understanding of the historic context of the conservation area. Whilst the CAAMP does not identify the dwelling as being on the local list, it appears to be agreed between the parties that it could be considered as a non-designated heritage asset. I would agree and note that it an example of the type of dwelling that specifically characterises this part of the conservation area.
8. The proposed single storey extension would extend across almost the whole width of the rear of the house. It would be of contemporary design with standing seam metal clad side walls and fully glazed rear wall, slightly setback beneath a roof overhang. It would be connected to the host dwelling at the outer corners of the angled bay windows by glazed panels and would be flat roofed to a height just below the moulded stone string course running along the top of the bay windows. A glazed 'box' would extend above and enclose the decorative arch of the rear door. No physical changes are proposed to the rear ground floor façade.
9. The Appellant argues that the current proposal would be a low-profile building of simple and symmetrical form, centred on the host dwelling, providing an elegant and honest addition which due to its careful design, would allow the existing rear elevation to be appreciated and seen through the glazed rear elevation. I agree that the proposal has been carefully designed in a way that minimises disruption and alteration of the existing rear façade of the building and in principle, a contemporary approach would not necessarily be inappropriate. However, rather than providing a 'subtle juxtaposition' with the architectural character of the host building, as suggested by the Appellant, I

consider that its 'simple' box design would appear incongruous and unsympathetic when seen against the architectural articulation of the park facing rear elevation of the dwelling. Furthermore, whilst noting that the important rear façade would not be physically altered, external views of it would be limited by the size and positioning of the proposed extension and whilst the rear elevation would be glazed, views through would be diminished by the solid walls and overhang design. I consider that the proposed extension would effectively obscure much of the important rear façade of the building thus diminishing its significance.

10. I viewed the site from the adjoining Christchurch Park, both from the footpath just to the south of the appeal site boundary and from further to the south within the main area of the park. From the footpath, a glimpsed view of the dwelling was possible notwithstanding the existence of vegetation, including individual trees adjacent to the boundary. From further away, partial views of the upper part and roof of the dwelling were obtained. Whilst it is likely that in winter months the effect of the screening would be reduced, the visual impact of the proposed ground floor addition would likely be limited, I consider that overall, the setting of the Registered Park would be preserved.
11. Both parties refer to a previous permission for a fully glazed extension granted in 2021.¹ The Appellant confirms that this scheme can no longer be delivered in a way that would be compliant with building regulations therefore the appeal scheme was put forward as an alternative. On this basis it would not appear to provide a realistic 'fall-back' situation but, in any event, unlike the current proposal, its design was such as to allow full views of the rear elevation of the dwelling to be maintained.
12. Overall, I conclude that the proposal would have a harmful impact on the heritage assets. Paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that when considering the impact on a designated heritage asset great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. In respect of the Park Conservation Area, the level of harm would be less than substantial. The Appellant suggests that the public benefits arising would be environmental benefits that would significantly surpass the credentials of the previously approved scheme, albeit these do not appear to be detailed. However, given that it appears to be acknowledged that the previous scheme cannot be delivered due to non-compliance with Building Regulations, this would not be a benefit as such. In any event, such environmental credentials would not outweigh the harm identified. In addition, the harm to the non-designated heritage asset, which is also less than substantial, would not be outweighed.
13. I therefore find that the proposed extension would fail to conserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Park Conservation Area. This harm would not be outweighed by any public benefits. It would also result in an unjustified level of harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset. It would thereby conflict with Policies DM12, DM13 and DM16 of the Core Strategy and Policies DPD Review (2022) which seek to ensure that development is well-designed, seeks opportunities for enhancement of the town's heritage and responds to the historic patterns of development and character of the area, protects and enhances the special interest of the conservation areas and that residential extensions are respectful in terms of character, scale and design.

¹ LPA ref: 20/01065/FUL

Policy DM13 states that where less than substantial harm to a heritage asset is identified, this will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal and that a balanced judgement will be applied in considering the effect of a proposal on a non-designated heritage asset.

14. For the reasons set out above I find that the proposal would not accord with the Framework. The Appellant suggests that the 'presumption in favour' should be applied but given my conclusions above the application of the policies of the Framework provide a clear reason for refusing the development, notwithstanding that I do not consider the relevant development plan policies to be out of date.

Conclusions

15. I therefore conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

P Jarvis

INSPECTOR