



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 November 2023

by P B Jarvis BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28.11.2023

Appeal Ref: APP/J1535/D/23/3325330
5 Staples Road, Loughton IG10 1HP

- 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 Jake Marshall against the decision of Epping Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref EPF/0760/23, dated 1 April 2023, was refused by notice dated 22 June 2023.
 - The proposed development is replacement front door and surround.
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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 property and wider area including the Staples Road Conservation Area (SRCA) and adjoining non-designated heritage asset.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a large detached two storey Victorian 'villa' with central door and projecting bay windows either side. It is constructed of red brick with tiled pitched roof. There is later two storey side extension of weatherboard finish. It is set back from the road frontage the front boundary marked by a hedge with vehicular access to the side. The central doorway entrance is surrounded by a decorative brick arch with small canopy above further brick detailing. The doorway is set back within a storm porch and consists of a solid painted timber door with fanlight above and 'slit' windows to either side. The building is not locally listed but is identified in the Staples Road Conservation Area Appraisal (2014) (CAA) as a 'Key Building of Townscape Merit'.
4. The CAA identifies the unaltered streetscape as one of the elements of special interest and factors contributing to the special character of the SRCA. The SRCA is subject to an Article 4 Direction which limits the alteration of the dwelling houses that front the highway.
5. The western end of Staples Road where the appeal site is located is characterised by terraces of modest Victorian cottages set close to the road frontage providing a relatively continuous built frontage, and a few large, detached properties. No. 7, known as Forest Villa, to the east of the appeal site is a large detached three storey Victorian property which also has a central doorway with projecting bays either side on ground and first floors. The roof is steeply pitched finished in slate with two pitched roof dormers either side of a

central 'belvedere'. This building is locally listed and the CAA refers to it, and the dwelling on the appeal site, as being important larger landmark houses built in the 1880's. According to the CAA both numbers 5 and 7 were constructed by the same local builder, George Beckett, adopting a similar form and layout.

6. The CAA also notes that original doors that remain are an exemplary selection. These include Nos. 5 and 7 which are of solid timber construction with four unglazed panels with stop chamfering. The Council consider that this adds to the significance of the pair. I would concur with that view and given their historic interest consider that they contribute significantly to the SRCA.
7. The proposed replacement front door would replicate the four-panel style and timber material of the existing door, though it would incorporate two glazed panels to the upper part. Whilst of good quality, the loss of the original door would not only result in harm to the significance of SRCA but, given the historic links between the dwelling on the appeal site and Forest Villa, there would also be harm to the setting of the non-designated heritage asset. I do not consider that these harms would be reduced to any material degree due to the set back of the property from the road as suggested by the Appellant.
8. Policy DM7 of the Epping Forest District Local Plan (2023) (EFDLP), consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), states that great weight is to be given to the asset's conservation. Given the above findings, less than substantial harm arises to the designated heritage asset, the SRCA. This is to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum use.
9. Whilst the Appellant notes that the existing door is draughty and sticks in summer, there is no evidence or other information to suggest that the existing door is of poor or irreparable condition, indeed the Appellant acknowledges that it is in a reasonable condition, albeit not energy efficient. In addition, there is little evidence to demonstrate that the existing door cannot be made more secure. Whilst the replacement door would result in improvements in these regards, no other public benefits have been identified. As such there would be no justification for the harm arising.
10. In addition, also consistent with Framework paragraph 203, EFDLP Policy DM7 states that the effect on non-designated heritage assets should be taken into account and that a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of harm or loss of significance is required which in the circumstances would result in a moderate level of harm. There are no factors that outweigh this harm.
11. Overall, therefore, I find that the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance SRCA, would harm the setting of the locally listed building thereby resulting in an unjustified loss of significance to both. As a result, it would conflict with EFDLP Policy DM7 and the Framework. There are no other material considerations that outweigh this harm.

Conclusions

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

P B Jarvis

INSPECTOR