



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 November 2023

by C Harding BA (Hons) PGCert PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28TH November 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/E2530/D/23/3323118

68 North Parade, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 8AN

- 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 Ms Sandra Sayers against the decision of South Kesteven District Council.
 - The application Ref S22/2248, dated 14 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 6 March 2023.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as "Proposed rear dormer".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Grantham Conservation Area ('the CA'), and its effect on the setting of 70, 72 and 74 North Parade, which are Grade II listed buildings ('the LBs').

Reasons

3. The appeal property is located within Grantham Conservation Area. 70 and 72 North Parade form a single Grade II listed building and adjoin the appeal site to the north. 74 North Parade adjoins numbers 70 and 72, and is also Grade II listed. I am therefore mindful of the statutory duties under sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
4. Paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Any harm should require clear and convincing justification in line with Paragraph 200 of the Framework.
5. The CA is focused upon the centre of Grantham and its significance is derived from the wide range of high-quality older buildings from a variety of periods, and the strong character areas that are evident. The appeal site is identified within the Grantham Conservation Area Character Appraisal as forming part of the 'Residential District Character Area', and the Grantham Townscape Character Assessment identifies the appeal site as falling within the 'Early Northern Suburbs' Character Area and describes North Parade itself as being 'the best group of late-Georgian/early-Victorian townhouses in Grantham'. Together these documents highlight the uniformity of character of residential properties within the sub-areas, and that North Parade has a processional

character along an important gateway route. This processional character is derived, in part, from the uniformity of the street.

6. The significance of the LBs is derived from their age, status and architectural quality. Other residential properties on North Parade which, in part, form the setting of the LBs, contribute to this significance by providing evidential context, in the form of the distinctive processional character of North Parade.
7. To the rear of the appeal site is a large residential block located on Manners Street. Manners Street is an access road serving this more modern development and is not therefore, a busy thoroughfare. However, despite the presence of detached garages, rear garden boundary walls and domestic garden trees and shrubs, the some of the rear elevations and a large proportion of rear roofslopes of properties on North Parade are visible from public vantage points.
8. In contrast to the front elevations of properties on North Parade, which exhibit strong character, I was able to see on my site visit that several properties in the street have been extended to the rear by a variety of means. However, the largely unaltered rear roofscape of the appeal property and those neighbouring it, including numbers 70 and 72, reinforces the uniformity of character that is evident in the front elevations, as well as providing contrast to the larger scale property at number 74.
9. As a result, whilst it is the front elevations of properties on North Parade that provide much of their significance, in terms of the listed buildings, their setting, and the wider CA, the rear elevations and roofscapes are not wholly unremarkable, and contribute to this significance, albeit to a lesser extent.
10. The proposal would introduce a catslide dormer window into the rear roofslope of the appeal property. Although the proposal would be inset from the boundaries of the roofslope and incorporate appropriate materials, it would nevertheless represent a substantial addition to the appeal property, occupying a significant area of the plane of the roof, and rear dormer windows are not a characteristic feature of the street. The proposal would interrupt the existing largely unaltered character of the roofscape of this part of the street, leading to a loss of uniformity.
11. Consequently, as a result of the size and positioning of the proposed development, it would result in harm to the character and appearance of the CA, as well as the setting of the nearby Grade II listed buildings. I find that this harm would be less than substantial.
12. Paragraph 196 of the Framework states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm, that this should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimal viable use. In this instance, I have been presented with little in terms of public benefits that would outweigh this harm.
13. For this reason, the proposed development would fail to comply with Policies EN6 and DE1 of the South Kesteven District Council Local Plan. Together, and amongst other factors, these policies seek to protect and enhance heritage assets and their setting. They also state that where a development would cause harm to heritage assets and their setting, it will only be granted permission where this harm would be outweighed by public benefits. They also require that

development makes a positive contribution to the townscape character of the area, and be of appropriate scale, given the context of the area. The proposal would also be contrary to Parts 12 and 16 of the Framework in these respects.

Other Matters

14. Although not a matter of dispute between the main parties, even if I were to agree that the proposal would not have an adverse effect on the living conditions of occupiers of nearby residential properties, this would be a neutral factor, and would not weigh in favour of the scheme.
15. The appeal scheme represents an evolution of a scheme for a larger dormer window which was also refused by the Council. Whilst I acknowledge that the proposal is of reduced scale in comparison to that previously refused permission, I must determine the appeal on the basis of the merits of the scheme that is before me.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Harding

INSPECTOR