



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 March 2024

by E Dade BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15th April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Q0505/W/23/3333215

60 High Street, Trumpington, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB2 9LS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Jack Hawkins against the decision of Cambridge City Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/00100/FUL.
 - The development proposed is extension and conversion of existing garage into a single bed dwelling.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. As the proposal is in a conservation area and relates to a listed building, I have had special regard to sections 16(2), 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - whether the proposed development would preserve Grade II listed building, Nos 60-62 High Street, its setting, and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses; and the extent to which it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Trumpington Conservation Area;
 - the effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of the occupants of Sixpence Lodge.

Reasons

Listed Building and Trumpington Conservation Area

4. The site comprises an existing garage, garden land and a recently constructed dwelling. The parties consider the site to be within the curtilage of Nos 60 and 62 High Street, which are designated as a Grade II listed building. In addition, the site is located within the Trumpington Conservation Area (CA).
5. The CA is centred around the Church of St Mary & St Michael. It encompasses the High Street, Maris Lane, and Church Lane, and includes Trumpington Hall and surrounding parkland and agricultural land. Its significance is derived from the settlement's historic form and buildings, distinct from nearby Cambridge.

6. There are views into the site from Maris Lane, where the site's access adjoins the highway. The Trumpington Conservation Area Appraisal 2010 notes Maris Lane is a narrow curving street with a combination of landscaping and buildings that serve to bring the countryside to the village. A cluster of trees provides screening and privacy along the site's western boundary.
7. The High Street runs parallel to the site's frontage, existing offices and a petrol station are located to the north, and a supermarket car park lies to the rear of the site. The surrounding area therefore includes features which are urban in character. The CA appraisal recognises the CA includes buildings which vary greatly in scale and age, and includes a wide range of activities, such as residential, agricultural and commercial uses. Therefore, the diversity of buildings and uses in the area contributes to the CA's character.
8. Nos 60-62 was constructed in the early 19th century with later extensions and additions and is built of gault brick under a hipped slate roof with sash windows and glazing bars. The building is set close to the road, and formerly served as a toll house having been built along the Cambridge Turnpike. The building's significance is therefore derived from its architectural interest and historic use. The toll house's original plot benefited from an open character, which has been reduced through the recent construction of a new dwelling.
9. Modern development detracts somewhat from the area's appearance. Nonetheless, Nos 60-62 remains a prominent landmark on the corner of the High Street and Maris Lane, and the original purpose as a toll house can still be understood. The Heritage Statement and CA Appraisal recognise the building makes a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the CA.
10. The proposed development would involve conversion and extension of the existing garage building to form a dwelling. The design seeks to complement the adjacent dwellings through its scale and materials.
11. However, the proposal would extend the building rearwards, and the extension would project to the south where it would be visible from the site's frontage. Whilst the dwelling would be single storey, the proposal would increase the height of the building through the addition of a pitched roof. The proposal would include hardstanding and domestic paraphernalia, such as a patio, path, bin store and cycle store. The proposal would therefore represent a significant increase in the size of the building, and scale of development on the site.
12. The appearance of the building would change from that of an ancillary garage to a detached dwelling, and therefore would differ significantly from what is currently on site. From its appearance and increased scale and volume, the proposed development would appear cramped within the site and erode the open character of the setting of No 60-62.
13. Dwellings in the area typically sit close to the footway edge or set back by a modest front garden. The garage building is set back from the High Street, behind adjacent dwellings, and therefore the siting of the proposed dwelling would appear out of keeping with the layout of surrounding development.
14. There are trees and shrubs around the boundary of the newly constructed dwelling. However, at present, the shrubs are low and sparse, and provide little screening from the public highway. The proposed dwelling would therefore be visually prominent within the street scene.

15. Even taking into account the diversity of development within the area, as identified above, the proposed development would have a cramped appearance to the detriment of the setting of No 60-62, and its siting would appear prominent and out of keeping with the layout of surrounding development. For these reasons, the proposal would harm the character of the CA.
16. Paragraph 205 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 206 goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through development within an asset's setting and that this should have a clear and convincing justification. As set out above, the proposal would harm the setting of No 60-62 and harm the character of the CA. I find the harm to be less than substantial. However, this harm attracts great weight.
17. Under such circumstances, paragraph 208 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The proposal would provide one dwelling in a sustainable location with strong opportunities for use of alternative modes of transport. The proposal would therefore make a small contribution to the area's housing supply in an accessible location, attracting modest weight in favour of the scheme.
18. However, this public benefit would not be of sufficient magnitude to outweigh the harm to the setting of the listed building and character of the CA. On balance, I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the setting of Nos 60-62 High Street and would not preserve the character or appearance of the CA and would thus fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act.
19. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policy 52 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 (LP) which requires the form, height and layout of development be appropriate to the surrounding pattern of development and the character of the area and would be contrary to LP Policies 57 and 61 which together require proposals have a positive impact on their setting and preserve or enhance the significance of the heritage assets of the city.

Living conditions

20. The proposed development would utilise the garage and surrounding garden land associated with the recently constructed dwelling, named Sixpence Lodge. In addition, cycle and bin storage areas would be relocated and a new parking space would be created to the side of Sixpence Lodge.
21. As a consequence, Sixpence Lodge's external amenity space would be limited to a modest-sized garden between the High Street and the vehicular and pedestrian access to No 60. The High Street provides an important and busy route to Cambridge. Whilst boundary trees and landscaping were retained and enhanced as part of the construction of Sixpence Lodge, users of the garden would be exposed to noise and disturbance from vehicle movements along the adjacent highway and accesses.
22. The appellant refers to the arrangements for external amenity space at other recent development at the High Street. Whilst the nearby apartments are served by balconies providing private external space, it is my understanding that occupants also have access to communal external amenity areas, and therefore the provision of external amenity space differs from the proposal.

23. The proposed development would adversely impact on the quality of the private amenity space at adjacent dwelling Sixpence Lodge, resulting in the amenity space being of inadequate standard. The proposed development would therefore harm the living conditions of the occupants of Sixpence Lodge.
24. The proposed development would conflict with LP Policy 52 which requires proposals involving development of garden land protect the amenity of neighbouring properties. In addition, the proposed development would fail to comply with LP Policies 50 and 57 which together require amenity space be designed to allow effective and practical use by residents and successfully integrate functional needs.

Conclusion

25. The proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the provisions of the Framework, which outweigh this finding. Therefore, for the reasons given, the appeal should be dismissed.

E Dade

INSPECTOR