
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 February 2025

by **S Simms BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/J0540/D/24/3353676

249, Park Road, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE1 2UT

- 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 S Rehman against the decision of Peterborough City Council.
 - The application reference is 24/00649/HHFUL.
 - The development proposed is external wall insulation and rendering.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The word '- Retrospective' was added to the end of the description of development on both the application form and decision notice. I have deleted this reference as it does not form an act of development in itself.
3. It was clear on site that the proposed development has already been implemented as described in the application.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of both the host building and the locality.

Reasons

5. The site contains a two-storey semi-detached Edwardian dwelling behind a front garden which is mostly paved and bounded by a red brick wall with railings. It has been externally insulated, rendered and painted pale grey. The adjoining dwelling has not and submitted photographs show that they were very similar.
6. The Council's Conservation Officer considers the semi-detached pair to be a non-designated heritage asset, an example of early twentieth-century residential expansion of the city, significant for its aesthetic and artistic heritage value and its contribution to the character and appearance of the street.
7. The Council states that the Park Conservation Area boundary is about 150 metres from the site. I observed on my visit an increasing continuity of character heading south along this section of Park Road, in terms of the age and style of buildings, with an abundance of mature street and boundary trees.

8. I find that, based on the evidence, the semi-detached pair made a worthwhile contribution to the character and appearance of the area in their original form. Whilst not in the immediate setting of the Conservation Area, it forms part of a prelude to the more consistent character found further south along Park Road.
9. Several important design elements and motifs are no longer visible on the appeal property. The depth of the cladding has also altered proportions at interfaces with windows and eaves, now appearing ungainly. Both the interface and comparison with the adjoining property is also somewhat jarring.
10. The development does not replicate or otherwise reflect features that previously contributed to the character and appearance of both the host building and the locality, contrary to Peterborough Local Plan (PLP) Policy LP19, and this causes significant material harm to which I attach significant weight.
11. Little or no analysis of context or of other ways to secure energy efficiency gains that might cause lesser, or no loss of significance is provided. The development does not use materials that reinforce or enhance local distinctiveness. Overall, it therefore conflicts with PLP Policy LP16, which, amongst other matters, expects development to respect the context of the site.

Other Matters

12. The appellant states that the development effected a noticeable improvement in heat retention. Whilst the Secretary of State attaches significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency, I have no evidence that the proposal is the optimal way of doing so in this case and I therefore attach limited weight to this.
13. The appellant states that the development improves the living environment of an elderly disabled person. I have had regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty and recognise both that this could minimise disadvantage due to age and disabilities and the need to take account of disabilities. I attach moderate weight to this.
14. Both considerations represent benefits, but they do not outweigh the significant harm that I have found to the character and appearance of the host building and the wider locality.

Conclusion

15. The harm to a building that contributes positively to the area, the reduction in its distinctiveness and consequent harm to the character and appearance of the area conflict with the development plan. This outweighs improvements to energy efficiency and to the living environment of an elderly disabled person.
16. Overall, I conclude that the proposal conflicts with the development plan and that other material considerations do not outweigh this. I therefore dismiss the appeal.

S Simms

INSPECTOR