



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 March 2025

by **K Savage BA(Hons) MPlan MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N3020/W/24/3350045

308 Carlton Hill, Carlton, Nottingham NG4 1GD

- 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 Hassan Ahmed (Nottingham Builders Ltd) against the decision of Gedling Borough Council.
 - The application reference is 2024/0303.
 - The development proposed is change of use of existing storage building to dwelling, plus external alterations and erection of boundary fence and wall.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have had regard to the updated National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) published on 12 December 2024.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are i) the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, and ii) whether the proposal would provide an acceptable standard of accommodation.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal relates to a detached, single storey building to the rear of 308 Carlton Hill and adjacent to the dwelling at 2 Second Avenue. The building is red brick with a dual pitched roof and twin garage doors to the front. It is used for storage.
5. Second Avenue is one of a number of streets leading from the commercial thoroughfare of Carlton Hill that are characterised by linear patterns of two storey, semi-detached and terraced housing set back from the street behind short front gardens. A number of design elements repeat along the street, including front bay windows and low front boundary treatments. There is some variety, such as the materiality of front walls and the specific designs of bay windows, but this does not undermine what is a consistent scale and ordered layout to the street that contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.
6. The existing garage does not fit within this pattern, being much smaller in scale than surrounding development. Although indicated to be in separate use to the property at 308 Carlton Hill, its scale and form give it the appearance of an outbuilding to its rear. The red brick façade matches the prevailing facing material

in the street and the building has a muted presence reflecting its ancillary scale and function. As such, it does not compete with the surrounding development for prominence, nor does it undermine the overall consistency of the street scene.

7. The proposal would retain the overall size and shape of the building, but would add a new window and door to the front, with the remainder of the existing openings infilled with vertical cladding. An existing window on the side elevation would be changed to a set of French doors and two rooflights would be added to the roof. The proposal includes a section of the garden of No 308 being fenced off to form an external space for the proposed dwelling.
8. The change to residential use would draw greater attention due to the altered exterior of the building and the creation of a side garden area, but also from the increased activity, comings and goings and night time illumination. As a result, the site would no longer contain an unassuming storage building, but a conspicuous dwelling that would be wholly out of scale and form with its surroundings. Moreover, it would occupy a severely constrained site, tight to the boundaries with 2 Second Avenue on one side and 310 Carlton Hill at the rear. Consequently, the dwelling would appear squeezed onto the site in a cramped manner and would fail to reflect the prevailing scale or pattern of development along the street.
9. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Gedling Borough Council Aligned Core Strategy (September 2014) (the ACS), which sets out that development will be assessed in terms of structure, texture and grain including street patterns, plot sizes, orientation and positioning of buildings and the layout of space, and Policy 40(a)(1) of the Local Planning Document Part 2 Local Plan (the P2LP) which requires development to be of a high standard of design that does not adversely affect the area by reason of its scale, bulk, form, layout or materials.

Standard of Accommodation

10. Policy 8 of the ACS requires that all residential developments should contain adequate internal living space. Policy LPD 32 and LPD 40 of the P2LP support proposals that do not have a significant adverse impact on the amenity of occupiers, including with respect to the impact on amenity space.
11. The dwelling is proposed as a single person, one bedroom unit of 40.5sqm gross internal area (GIA) spread across the ground floor and a first floor created in the roof space. The Council does not have a specific development plan policy relating to floorspace of new development, to which the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS)¹ could be applied in line with the Framework. However, the NDSS are still a material consideration in that they represent the latest national guidance on space standards and are a useful reference point in considering whether the proposed accommodation would be suitable in size.
12. The proposed dwelling would exceed the 37sqm NDSS standard for a one person, one bedroom dwelling. However, in contrast to a studio flat with an open plan layout across a single floor that maximises the available space, the dwelling would be arranged over two floors where space would be lost to access and circulation areas, including the hall and stairs. The need to accommodate a shower room on the ground floor would further reduce the space for kitchen, dining and living areas

¹ Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard - March 2015

to just over 14sqm. As a result, once furnished, the dwelling would have a confined layout with little discernible separation between areas and limited room to comfortably move about the space. This would result in cramped and oppressive living conditions for future occupants.

13. In addition, the proposed external space would be overlooked by the rear windows of No 308. Although these are stated by the appellant to be partially blocked at first floor level, they nevertheless serve kitchens of residential units and afford views over the proposed garden. It would also be adjacent to the street, and even if fencing were tall and solid enough to prevent direct overlooking, there would be a perception of activity in the street and traffic noise that would reduce the quality of the space for recreation by occupants. It would offer some utility for storage and hanging clothes to dry, but this would not compensate for its shortcomings or mitigate for the poor quality living space internally.
14. For these reasons, I find that the proposal would fail to provide an acceptable standard of accommodation for a prospective occupant, contrary to the aforementioned Policies 8 of the ACS and LPD 32 and LPD 40 of the P2LP.

Other Matters

15. The appellant refers to an application for prior approval (Council Ref 2023/0425) to convert the building to residential use. However, the application was ultimately refused and does not represent a fall-back position for the appellant. Moreover, whilst I note that the Council found no adverse impacts in terms of the prior approval matters, these are different matters to the main issues of the appeal and their acceptability does not mitigate the harm I have identified in other respects.
16. The Council did not refuse the application in respect of highway safety or the living conditions of neighbouring occupants. I have no substantive evidence to reach different conclusions in these matters, but an absence of harm means they are neutral factors in the overall planning balance.

Conclusion

17. The proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area and would fail to provide a suitable standard of accommodation. This results in conflict with development plan policies that are consistent with the Framework in seeking high standards of design and amenity for future users. Thus, I afford significant weight to these conflicts.
18. The proposal would make use of a brownfield site to add a dwelling to the housing stock in an accessible location. This would align with the Framework aim of boosting the supply of housing. However, the provision of a single dwelling would be a benefit of limited weight. There would be minor economic benefits arising for local contractors in implementing the development and in a future occupant using local services. However, these would also attract limited weight given the small scale of the development.
19. Overall, the material considerations in this case, including the Framework, do not indicate that permission should be forthcoming in spite of the identified conflicts with the development plan. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

K. Savage INSPECTOR