



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 25 May 2021 by Emma Worby BSc (Hons) MSc MRPTI

Decision by Martin Seaton BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/F3545/D/21/3268286

60 The Street, Barton Mills IP28 6AA

- 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 Les Belsberg against the decision of West Suffolk Council.
 - The application Ref DC/20/1063/HH, dated 18 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 19 November 2020.
 - The development proposed is a new build garage to the front of the property with new drive leading to it.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and Barton Mills Conservation Area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site accommodates a two-storey detached dwelling located within the Barton Mills Conservation Area (the Conservation Area), which is a designated heritage asset. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended, requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
5. The significance of the Conservation Area is identified as relating to its low density and dominance of landscape, a summary with which I would agree. Although the dwelling at the appeal site is a modern addition, the appeal site retains an open and spacious nature due to the distance of the property from the road which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area. The proposed garage would be located in the front garden between the dwelling and the road, and would be highly visible and prominent within the streetscene.
6. Although set back from the road and partially shielded by trees and the boundary wall, the size of the proposed garage is excessive in both floorspace and height when compared to the main dwelling. Due to its large and bulky size and prominent positioning forward of the current building line, the garage

would appear as a significant and dominant addition to the streetscene which would not be subservient to the host dwelling. The coverage of part of the open space to the front of the dwelling would result in the loss of the site's spacious nature to the detriment of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

7. The appellant has brought my attention to several other garages on The Street which are positioned forward of the dwelling, in particular the garage at No.68 which is similar to the proposal but closer to the road. It is not known as to when these were granted planning permission or if they form part of the original property. Although there are several examples in the area, they do not represent a prevailing part of the character of the streetscene and most are smaller than the proposal before me. Therefore, I do not consider that these examples set a precedent sufficient to outweigh the harm to the Conservation Area that I have identified.
8. I conclude that the development fails to preserve the character and appearance of the surrounding area and Barton Mills Conservation Area and would conflict with Section 72(1) of The Act. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policy CS5 of the Forest Heath Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010) and Policies DM2, DM17 and DM24 of the West Suffolk Joint Development Management Policies Document (2015). These policies seek to prevent development which does not enhance or maintain the character of the area and the setting of a Conservation Area.
9. The harm found is relatively small scale in the wider context of the whole Conservation Area and therefore, having regard to the Framework, the harm to the significance of the Barton Mills Conservation Area is less than substantial. The Framework requires, where there would be less than substantial harm, for it to be balanced against the public benefits of the scheme.
10. No public benefits have been outlined by the appellant and therefore, do not outweigh the less than substantial harm to the heritage asset previously identified.

Other Matters

11. The appellant has stated that support was received for the proposed development from the Parish Council and the local ward member and that the decision made at the Council's planning committee was not unanimous. However, these would be neutral factors which would not weigh in support of the proposed development.

Conclusion and Recommendation

12. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, the proposal would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole, and I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Emma Worby

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Seaton

INSPECTOR