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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 March 2013

by **Roger C Shrimplin MA(Cantab) DipArch RIBA FRTPI FCI Arb MCIL**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 10 April 2013

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### **Appeal A Reference: APP/E2530/A/12/2180420**

#### **'Corner House', The Green, Allington, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG32 2EA**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice, within the prescribed period, of a decision on an application for planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr Richard Machin against the decision of South Kesteven District Council.
- The application (reference S12/1016) was dated 2 May 2012.
- The development proposed is described in the application form as "conversion of existing two storey building, build two storey extension and demolish single storey garage and store room to form a separate dwelling, and the formation of a new vehicular access off a classified road".

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### **Appeal B Reference: APP/E2530/E/12/2180411**

#### **'Corner House', The Green, Allington, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG32 2EA**

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against the failure of the Council to determine an application for listed building consent.
- The appeal is made by Mr Richard Machin against the decision of South Kesteven District Council.
- The application (reference S12/1020) was dated 2 May 2012.
- The works proposed are described in the application form as "conversion of existing two storey building, build two storey extension and demolish single storey garage and store room to form a separate dwelling, and the formation of a new vehicular access off a classified road".

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### **Decision**

1. The appeals are dismissed.

### **Preliminary Point**

2. The proposals are described at some length in the application form, which incorporates both applications (for planning permission and listed building consent, respectively). The application for listed building consent, of course, relates only to proposed alterations to the building itself, rather than to external works.

### **Main issues**

3. I have concluded that the main issue to be determined in both these appeals is the effect of the proposed conversion and extension on the appeal building and its setting.

### **Reasons**

4. 'Corner House' dates from about 1830 and is constructed in a restrained classical style of red bricks under a grey pantile roof. It is an attractive and interesting building, which is listed (Grade II) as a building of special architectural or historic interest. It stands on the corner of The Green and Main Street and has a prominent location within the Allington Conservation Area. The property has a side boundary to Main Street from which the principal vehicular access is taken, by way of a drive which slopes up to the outbuildings, since, for the most part, the site is set at a higher level than the highway. The side boundary is dominated by a stone wall, which itself provides a strong feature in the streetscene. The wall retains the higher garden land and is topped by an established hedge.
5. The historic core of the village at Allington is rather loose-knit, characterised by properties on relatively large plots. The Welby Arms Public House, to the north of the appeal site, provides a focus in its location on The Green and a number of buildings in the vicinity are listed, in addition to 'Corner House', which has a group value in its setting in the Conservation Area.
6. The appeal site itself has been created from the grounds of 'Corner House' by subdividing the plot. The existing house would retain a modest garden, by comparison with its existing grounds, including a private area immediately at the rear of the house.
7. An existing outbuilding, in the grounds of 'Corner House', would be converted and extended to form a new dwelling, known as 'The Barn'. It is a substantial two-storey building, constructed of red brick under a pantile roof. It has the character of a domestic or agricultural outbuilding, with a large opening in the main elevation that has the appearance of an old carriage door, though it has now been infilled. The building has been converted to provide domestic ancillary accommodation and is reasonably well finished.
8. A single storey garage building is attached to this main two-storey "barn", which contributes to the character of the site though it is by no means outstanding in its own right, architecturally. It is proposed that this garage building should be demolished and replaced by a large extension to the main structure.
9. The new dwelling, 'The Barn', would enjoy a plot of a reasonable size (by modern standards), though the garden would largely be located at the front of the dwelling. It would have a separate entrance in Main Street, Allington, for which a new opening would need to be created in the boundary wall on the frontage in Main Street.
10. It is proposed to add a large two-storey extension to the existing "barn" building; indeed, the scale of the extension would rival that of the original. It would be constructed in similar materials but even so, it would significantly

change the character of the original building, greatly adding to its overall bulk in relation to its neighbours, especially the listed building at 'Corner House'. Moreover, the scheme would change the rather loose pattern of development in this part of the Allington Conservation Area, thereby undermining its historic character.

11. Most significantly, the proposed development would require a major change to the appearance of the Main Street frontage of the existing plot, involving the removal of a stretch of the existing stone wall and the creation of a new vehicular access.
12. Primary legislation imposes a clear statutory framework for making decisions which affect the historic environment.
13. Sections 66(1) and 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 impose obligations on those considering whether to grant planning permission and listed building consent (respectively) for development or works that affect a listed building. In such cases, it is necessary to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any feature of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
14. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires decision makers to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas affected by development proposals.
15. That statutory framework is reinforced by the 'National Planning Policy Framework', especially at Section 12, which also points out the desirability of putting heritage assets to viable uses.
16. Policies in the Development Plan also have statutory force (specifically in relation to the planning appeal) and they reinforce the policies in the 'National Planning Policy Framework'. Policy EN1 of the Council's 'Core Strategy', which is concerned with design considerations, is particularly relevant in this case.
17. The proposed alterations to the "barn" would greatly increase its overall size and the extension would alter its basic form, by adding a large building element at right-angles to the existing building. Although the internal alterations to the existing building would be limited in their effect, bearing in mind that the existing building is a curtilage building rather than a structure which is listed in its own right, the overall change would be dramatic. It would significantly alter the outbuilding itself, causing it to rival 'Corner House' and eroding the setting of the listed building.
18. Planning policies recognise the need for listed buildings to be put to practical uses, while seeking their protection. Nevertheless, it is necessary to give due weight to the desirability of protecting the listed building and its setting and the proposed works for the creation of a new dwelling would fail to achieve that. Nor is there a particular need to find a new use for the building, since it has a current practical function as a relatively modest domestic outbuilding.
19. The impact of the project on the Conservation Area more generally would also be striking. The removal of a significant portion of the stone boundary wall would change the streetscene, in which it is an important visual feature.

Obviously, the change could not be said to preserve the appearance of the Conservation Area, but nor would it be enhanced. Moreover, the subdivision of the plot at 'Corner House' would erode the spatial pattern or "grain" of the village and thus erode the character of the Conservation Area.

20. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established "urban" area, which is "sustainable" in planning terms, and the contribution that the appeal scheme would make to the provision of residential accommodation in the locality weighs in favour of the appeal. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the harm that would be done to the historic building and to its setting in the Allington Conservation Area outweighs the benefits of the project.

21. Hence, I have concluded that the scheme before me would conflict with the planning aim of protecting the historic environment and I am convinced that the appeals must fail. Although I have considered all the matters that have been raised in the representations, I have found nothing to cause me to alter my decision.

*Roger C Shrimplin*

INSPECTOR



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