



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 January 2020

by **Matthew Woodward BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/M2325/D/19/3240807

8 Squires Court, South Clifton Street, Lytham, Lancashire FY8 5HN

- 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 Mr Alan Nicholson against the decision of Fylde Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/0519, dated 24 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 20 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'retrospective application for the replacement of original windows with UPVC double glazed units. The property is within the Lytham Conservation Area'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the replacement of original windows with UPVC double glazed units at 8 Squires Court, South Clifton Street, Lytham, Lancashire FY8 5HN in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/0519, dated 24 June 2019, and the plans submitted with it.

Procedural Matters

2. The development has already taken place. As 'retrospective' is not an act of development I have amended the description of development given by the appellant in my decision above in order to reflect the particulars of the development to which this appeal relates. Furthermore, the submitted plans reflect the development that has been carried out and I have assessed the appeal based on the development that now exists.
3. Throughout the evidence reference is made to both the 'Lytham Town Centre Conservation Area' and the 'Lytham Conservation Area'. The Council has provided me with the definitive map of the conservation area and it is referred to as 'Lytham Town Centre Conservation Area' on the decision notice. For clarity I will refer to it as such throughout my decision.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the Lytham Town Centre Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal relates to a dwelling which fronts Shepherd Street and forms one of a small group of properties known as Squires Court which are of a similar age

and design. The adjoining property, 7 Squires Court, is the subject of a separate appeal for a similar form of development¹.

6. The appeal site lies within the Lytham Town Centre Conservation Area (CA). A conservation area appraisal for the CA has not been submitted to me but from my site visit and the evidence before me, I consider that the significance of the CA derives, in part, from the varied design, scale, layout and architectural quality of the built form in the area. Due to the diverse appearance and types of buildings and structures close to the appeal site, the contribution each one makes to the character and appearance of the CA is similarly varied. However, there is consistency running through the CA in terms of the closeness of the built form to the surrounding streets which exacerbates their narrowness. The presence of several period properties imparts a historic character to an area that is otherwise notably varied.
7. Whilst the appeal dwelling hosts several elements of architectural detailing and a fenestration design reflective of the historic characteristics of the area, the brickwork type and pattern, and the presence of plastic rainwater gutters and downpipes give the dwelling a more modern appearance than many of the other buildings that exist outside Squires Court, reflective of its more recent construction². Moreover, despite the presence of several good examples of period properties within the area, the appeal property lies close to the junction of Shepherd Street and South Clifton Street, the latter of which is fronted by a number of relatively featureless boundary walls and buildings along with garage doors and overall it lacks a unifying architectural and historical richness.
8. Ignoring the windows at No 8 which are the subject of a separate decision, I saw on my site visit that the windows associated with the dwellings within Squires Court were supported by traditional designed timber frames. The difference between the timber framed windows and those within the appeal dwelling is not immediately noticeable when walking along the street. However, the difference principally concerns the bulkier form of the central cross pieces, casements and general lack of depth in the overall frame composition.
9. The use of UPVC is not objectionable in itself, and I saw several examples of UPVC window frames close to the appeal site along South Clifton Street. I accept, however, that UPVC is a feature of modern design and it was clear on closer inspection that the windows were not framed with traditional materials. Nonetheless, despite their bulkier form and synthetic composition, the window frames appear authentic in style, reflecting the age, design and overall fenestration composition of the existing dwellings in Squires Court. To my mind the replacement windows do not harm the defining characteristics of the CA and do not appear out of step with the varied appearance and layout of the existing built form.
10. Therefore, I conclude that the development is consistent with the preservation of the character and appearance of the CA. It does not conflict with Policies ENV5 or GD7 of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032 which require, amongst other matters, that developments do not have an unacceptable impact on historic street patterns and ensure preservation of the historic environment. In

¹ Appeal reference – APP/M2325/D/19/3240738

² The Council confirms 'Squires Court' was approved under application reference - 88/0293

accordance with paragraph 192 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the development sustains the significance of the CA.

11. In reaching my decision I have taken into account the duty imposed by Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requiring decision makers to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

Conditions

12. As the development has already taken place, I do not consider it necessary to impose a standard 'time-limit' condition or an approved plans condition, nor are any other conditions necessary.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above the appeal is allowed.

Matthew Woodward

INSPECTOR