



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 May 2023

by L Fleming BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 June 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/A2525/W/22/3310042

Churchills, West Street, Long Sutton, Spalding PE12 9BN

- 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 K Bunn against the decision of South Holland District Council.
- The application Ref H11-0726-22, dated 20 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 19 October 2022.
- The development proposed is conversion of snooker room into 2 Bedrooms to be rented out to general public (no breakfast will be provided).

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Background and Main Issue

2. The appeal property is the grade II listed Conservative Club, a mid/late C19 brick town house with a slate roof in use as a public house (Churchill's) within the Long Sutton Conservation Area (CA). The proposal seeks to sub-divide a first-floor room with stud walls to create two bedrooms to be let out. Although the evidence refers to an application for listed building consent for the same scheme. I confirm that the appeal before me concerns only the application for planning permission.
3. The significance of Churchill's is founded on its historical and architectural interest whereas the CA derives its significance from its range of historic buildings and their layout arranged on the main routes through Long Sutton. Mindful of my statutory duties, consistent with the Council, I agree the proposal before me, would have a neutral impact on both of these designated heritage assets. The Council's concerns relate only to the impact of the proposed development on parking. The main issue is therefore the effect of the proposal on highway safety with particular regard to parking.

Reasons

4. Policy 36 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-36 (2019) (LP) in summary, requires all new development, including changes of use, to provide parking in accordance with minimum standards unless a high quality-design can demonstrate that a lower standard of provision meets the overall aims of the policy. Furthermore, it states innovative solutions to vehicle parking provision including shared spaces, and the incorporation of measures such as car clubs will be supported. It also says, in summary, that to demonstrate compliance a transport assessment (TA) and associated travel plan (TP) should be submitted which is proportionate to the scale of the scheme.
5. The proposal does not include the provision of any off street car parking spaces, whereas applying the Council's minimum parking standards, the

- proposal would be required to provide two off street parking spaces. This is not contested and the application is not supported by a TA or TP.
6. I note the comments that there are two public car parks within an extremely short distance to Churchill's so it is highly unlikely that any cars relating to an overnight stay would park on the roadside. However, there is no detailed information relating to whether these car parks would be accessible overnight or if any measures would be put in place to ensure the occupants of the proposed development would use them. Furthermore, there is also no analysis of on street parking in the area which allows me to understand whether or not the parking demand generated by the scheme could be reasonably met on street without compromising highway safety in the area.
 7. I also acknowledge the comments that off street parking provision could be secured at another location nearby through an agreement of an appropriate planning obligation. However, the details of any such obligation are not before me and based on the evidence I cannot be satisfied such an approach would overcome the direct conflict with Policy 36 of the LP I have identified above.
 8. Thus, without substantive detailed evidence to the contrary, even though paragraph 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, I simply do not have sufficient evidence to make an assessment as to whether or not the proposal would harm highway safety in the area.
 9. Overall, therefore, based on the limited evidence before me, I must take a precautionary approach and find that due to the lack of appropriate off street parking provision, without clear substantive evidence to the contrary, there is a risk the scheme would compromise highway safety in the area. The proposed development therefore conflicts with the aims of Policies 2, 3 and 36 of the LP, which, among other things, seek to ensure new development is served by appropriate parking provision and does not compromise highway safety in the area.

Other Matters

10. I acknowledge the proposal would have economic benefits associated with the provision of new short stay accommodation in the area. I note the comments about other similar developments nearby which have not provided off street parking. However, the full details of those examples are not before me. I have determined the appeal on its merits and none of these matters or any others raised outweigh my findings above. Even though the Highway Authority have not objected to the proposal, this does not mean the scheme, which I have found to be in conflict with the development plan, is acceptable.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the proposal would not accord with the development plan and the appeal should therefore be dismissed.

L Fleming
INSPECTOR