

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 September 2016

by R 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: 27 September 2016

Appeal Reference: APP/V2825/D/16/3150572

2 Cardinal Close, Northampton NN4 0RP

- 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 A Powell against the decision of Northampton Borough Council.
 - The application (reference N/2016/0193, dated 13 February 2016) was refused by notice dated 11 April 2016.
 - The development proposed is described in the application form as “extending bedrooms and adding a bathroom to bedroom 1”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issues

2. The main issue to be determined in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and on its surroundings.

Reasons

3. The appeal site lies within an established residential area of Northampton, which is characterised by two-storey houses in a conventional suburban layout. In the vicinity of the appeal site, many of the houses reflect a more or less consistent type, with traditional construction of brickwork under tiled roofs. In particular, many of the houses incorporate a “Tudor” style gable feature on the front elevation. Frequently, a single storey garage element is attached to one side of the main part of each house, though in a number of cases extensions have been built extending the two-storey form across most of the width of the individual plot.
4. Number 2 Cardinal Close follows this standardised form, of brickwork construction with a front gable element that is finished with a “timber frame” design and which reflects its near neighbours. As in other cases, a single storey garage element is attached to one side of the main element of the building.
5. It is now proposed that a side extension should be built, to create larger bedrooms at first floor level (one of which would benefit from an en-suite

- bathroom). The front gable would be modified to create a much wider element, but repeating the "timber framing" style.
6. Among other things, the 'National Planning Policy Framework' emphasises the aim of "requiring good design" in the broadest sense (notably at Section 7) and it points out the importance of creating an attractive streetscape and maintaining the overall quality of the area.
 7. Policy S10 of the 'West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy' sets out the Council's "sustainable development principles", which include an emphasis on design considerations. Policies H18 and E20 of the 'Northamptonshire Local Plan 1993-2006' deal more specifically with design considerations and, though the 'Local Plan' was adopted as long ago as 1997, these local policies also reflect the provisions of the 'National Planning Policy Framework'.
 8. The proposed side extension would extend the width of the house across its plot but that need not be unacceptable in principle, in its context and in relation to other properties in the immediate locality that have been extended previously. On the other hand, the detailed design of the proposed extension would incorporate a large gable feature that would be in marked contrast to other nearby buildings. The new gable would be disproportionately dominant on the front elevation and would create an awkward and intrusive element in the streetscene. In design terms, it would be most undesirable. Hence, the scheme which is the subject of this appeal would conflict with national and local policies that are aimed at achieving good design standards.
 9. The proposed wide gable feature would have the effect of providing additional space in the extended front bedroom of the house (the principal bedroom) but this limited practical benefit of the design would not outweigh its visual clumsiness and lack of architectural quality.
 10. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area and the proposed development would make a useful addition to the existing house. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the harm that would be done to the character and appearance of the existing house and to the streetscene outweigh the benefits of the project. Hence, I have concluded that the scheme before me would conflict with both national and local planning policies (including the Development Plan) and that it ought not to be allowed. 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