

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 October 2016

by Richard Schofield BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 05 October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/H2835/D/16/3157455

7 Fairfield Road, Isham, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN14 1HF

- 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 Mrs Rachel Ritchie against the decision of Borough Council of Wellingborough.
 - The application Ref WP/16/00114/FUL, dated 1 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 11 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is new single storey front extension, two storey side extension and rear extension (single storey), two storey/single storey rear extension, internal modifications.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The Council's concerns are with the front and side aspects of the proposed extension and, as such, this decision focuses upon them.
4. 7 Fairfield Road (No 7) is one half of a pair of semi-detached two storey houses, which themselves are part of a short, distinctive run of matching post-war dwellings. Of these, only 9 Fairfield Road (No 9) has been altered to the front with a somewhat incongruous single storey extension in place of the characteristic full width overhang above the first floor windows and front door.
5. Although of no significant architectural merit, the simple form and detailing of No 7, in combination with its identically designed 'mate' at No 5¹, is appealing and it makes a positive contribution to the streetscene.
6. There is a significant gap between the pairs of dwellings, being part of the driveway area, with some low key single storey garages set well back from the street. This situation, with the long rear gardens beyond, and deep verges to the front, adds to the sense of spaciousness of this part of the street.

¹ Albeit that No 7's windows have been replaced.

7. The appeal proposal would introduce an uncharacteristic full width ground floor extension to the front of the dwelling, with such alien features as a pitched roof porch and a fanlight over the front door. The two storey side extension would feature a hipped roof, which would fail to reflect, and appear markedly at odds with, the overwhelming gable roof design of the semi-detached dwellings on the street. This would be compounded by the prominence of the two storey side extension, contrasting with the extant low key single storey garage, which would serve to block the characteristic sense of space between Nos 7 and 9.
8. Overall, the scheme would fail to reflect the form of the host dwelling, unbalancing the distinctive symmetry of the semi-detached pair of which it is a part and diminishing the building's positive contribution to the streetscene here.
9. Some other dwellings on the street have been altered, generally, in my judgment, to the detriment of their originally coherent design and resulting in the loss of the sense of balance inherent in well-design semi-detached units. Thus, I do not consider that the front extension to No 9 can be considered as setting any kind of precedent and nor am I persuaded that adding a further harmful addition to the street scene could be regarded as beneficial.
10. I conclude that the proposed development would have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy policy 13(h) and North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy policy 8(d)(i). These seek to ensure that new development responds to the site's immediate and wider context; is of a high standard of design and architecture; and respects and enhances the character of its surroundings.

Other Matters

11. The occupiers of 9 Fairfield Road have raised concerns about the impact of the proposal upon their living conditions, notably in relation to light and outlook. I share their concerns in relation to the latter point, given the height and proximity of the side extension, and had I not found harm in relation to character and appearance I would have explored this matter further with the parties. As I am dismissing the appeal on the main issue, however, I have not considered this matter further.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, and taking all other matters into consideration, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Richard Schofield

INSPECTOR