

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 December 2016

by S D Harley BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI ARICS

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

Decision date: 9th December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/K2610/D/16/3160712

8 Barker Way, Thorpe End, Norwich NR13 5EZ

- 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 and Mrs M Spencer against the decision of Broadland District Council.
 - The application Ref 20161214, dated 11 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 12 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is: Single storey extension to the front and side. First floor extension above the attached garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The Council has raised no objection to the proposed single storey side extension or the proposed porch. Following my site visit I see no reason to come to a different conclusion. Accordingly for this appeal I consider the main issues are the effect of the proposed first floor extension on the character and appearance of the street scene and on the living conditions of the occupiers of No 6 Barker Way.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. Barker Way is a curved cul de sac on a modern residential estate. In the environs of the appeal site Barker Way is mainly two storey detached houses, although during my site visit I saw that some properties may have rooms in the roof space. Generally the houses are set well back from the footpath edge behind gardens, drives and verges. With some exceptions, referred to by the appellants as "pinch points", the two storey elements are positioned broadly on a line parallel to the curve of the carriageway. Some properties, including the appeal site and the immediate neighbour No 6, have double garages between the house and the footpath.
 4. The houses are of varied shapes, appearance and materials. The house at No 8 is broadly L shaped. The main part of the house faces the street and there is a two storey forward projection with a lower ridge line. The house roofs are of a half hip design and the walls are a mixture of brick and render with timber beams. In front of the forward projection is an attached hipped roof double garage with a ridge line almost as high as the eaves of the half hip roof on the forward projection.
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5. The proposed first floor extension would have a full gable facing the street. As it would embrace the full width of the garage the proposed roof would be almost as high as the main house roof and would be higher than the existing roof over the forward projection. Due to its height and bulk the resultant building form with a full gable roof, even taking account of the scale of the existing garage, would be out of character with the design of the host property and would appear prominent and over dominant in the street scene reducing the spacious feel of this part of the street. This harmful effect would be exacerbated by the use of render and timber beam detailing up to the apex of the gable.
6. I have taken account of the varied layout of buildings along Barker Way which I consider to be the most relevant of the examples drawn to my attention by the appellants. These include large properties with forward projecting gables such as Nos 1, 3, 6, 8, 9 and 23, some less than 5m from the road; the "pinch points" at the entrance to Barker Way, between Nos 20 and 23 and between Nos 14 and 15; and short shared cul-de-sacs at right angles to Barker Way. However, none of these examples in my view have the same harmful combination of disparate roof heights and shapes combined with bulk and architectural detailing and do not lead me to a different view.
7. I acknowledge that the birch trees at the front of the appeal site would provide some screening of the proposed extension. However, this effect would be much less at times that the trees were not in leaf. I also acknowledge that the garage at No 6 would help retain the transition in heights of the buildings. Neither of these matters is sufficient to outweigh the concerns I have identified above.

Living conditions

8. The proposed first floor extension would be significantly forward of both the main part of the house at No 6 and its forward projection. The proposed bedroom over the garage would have a window directly facing and close to the shared boundary. There are side windows at ground and first floor of the forward projection at No 6 which would be overlooked by this window reducing the privacy of the occupiers of that property. This concern is not outweighed in my view by either the width of the proposed window, the degree of screening afforded by the garage at No 6 or the fact that the window panes in No 6 are small.
9. I have considered whether this harm could be overcome by imposing a planning condition requiring the proposed window to be obscure glazed and non-opening above 1.7m height above the bedroom floor level. However, the appellants state that window is positioned to catch the morning daylight and therefore such a condition would be inappropriate.
10. The proposed first floor extension would be to the south east of the house at No 6. Its scale and position close to the boundary would in my view result in a loss of outlook and light for the occupiers of No 6. I note that the Council has not objected specifically on these grounds and that the house at No 6 is angled away from the shared boundary. Whilst a refusal on these grounds alone would not justify refusal I conclude that, in combination with the loss of privacy identified above, the proposed first floor extension would have a harmful effect on the living conditions of occupiers of No 6.

Other Matters

11. I acknowledge the wishes of the appellants to increase their available living accommodation. However, there may be other less harmful ways in which the living accommodation could be enlarged.
12. The proposals include a number of elements and I have considered whether a split decision might be appropriate. However the appellants state that the ground floor elements are a consequence of enlarging the upstairs and therefore a split decision is not appropriate.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above I conclude that the proposed first floor extension would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the street scene and on the living conditions of the occupiers of No 6. For the combination of these reasons I conclude it would be contrary to Policy 2 of the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk 2011 (as amended 2014), Policy GC4 of the Development Management DPD 2015 and Policy 2 of the Great Plumstead, Little Plumstead and Thorpe End Garden Village Neighbourhood Plan 2015. These jointly seek to ensure a high quality of design that respects the local character of the area and that respects the amenity of the occupiers of nearby properties.
14. In not complying with the above policies the proposed first floor extension would not comply with the development plan taken as a whole. It would also be contrary to those principles of the National Planning Policy Framework that seek good design and a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers of land and buildings. Taking into account all other relevant matters raised I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

SDHarley

INSPECTOR