
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2017

by Andrew McCormack BSc (Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 13 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/E2734/D/16/3163232

16 Wayside Close, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 8PJ

- 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 & Mrs Ralph Thompson against the decision of Harrogate Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 6.79.13297.FUL dated 14 July 2016 was refused by notice dated 14 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is demolition of free standing garage, part single storey and part two storey rear and side extension to house including integral garage.
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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 surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling which is situated at the head of a cul-de-sac known as Wayside Close. The area is characterised by modest semi-detached dwellings positioned in a regular pattern of development with gaps between the properties. Garages are set back from the front elevations of the dwellings and reinforce the important relationship between the gaps and the buildings. The consistent appearance and position of the properties in semi-detached pairs, particularly along Wayside Close, is a significant element of the overall character and appearance of the area and the spacious pattern of development. Furthermore, the appeal site is slightly elevated above adjacent plots due to the topography of the area.
 4. The proposal, incorporating an integral garage, would significantly add to the visual mass and scale of the property in the streetscene. Its position to the side and rear of the host property would inevitably reduce the amount of space around it and between it and the adjacent properties to the north east and north west of the site. I note that the plots relating to the appeal property and adjacent properties are limited in size. Furthermore, the proposed development would substantially increase the footprint of the original dwelling. Therefore, not only would the proposal significantly alter the modest appearance of the property but it would also have a detrimental effect on the spacious character of the area and its spatial quality.
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5. From what I have seen and read, the proposed extension would be an acceptable distance from nearby properties and therefore would it accord with the guidelines set out in the Council's House Extensions and Garages Design Guide (the Design Guide) relating to the privacy of neighbouring occupiers. However, from my observations, I find that the scale and position of the proposal would have a significantly detrimental impact on the spacious character and quality of the area which I have identified. Furthermore, I find that this would only be exacerbated by the elevated position of the appeal site above the adjacent properties on Wayside Walk which would make the proposal more imposing on its immediate area.
6. I note that the design of the proposed scheme would be subservient to the host property and would use materials to match the existing property. However, I find that the scale and mass of the proposed extension would appear as an overdevelopment of the limited plot. The appellant states the additional floor area created by the proposed extension would amount to less than the floor area of the existing property. Whilst this may be so, I note that the overall footprint area of the appeal property would almost double as result of the proposed development. Whilst I appreciate that much of the extension would be hidden from view on Wayside Close, I find that due to its scale and position, the proposal would have an adverse effect on the overall spacious character of the area.
7. I appreciate that the proposal is at the end of the group of semi-detached properties along the north east side of Wayside Close. Furthermore, I note the appellants' points relating to comparisons with the approved development at No 2 Wayside Close and other examples in the area. However, whilst I have had due regard to these other developments, I must assess the appeal proposal on its own merits and circumstances.
8. Having had regard to all of the above, I find that the size, scale and design of the proposal would create a substantial addition to the property. Despite its relatively secluded position in the streetscene, the scheme would significantly alter the modest appearance of the original dwelling which is a prevalent feature in the surrounding area. In addition, the proposed scheme would undermine the spatial quality and spacious character and appearance of the area and would therefore have a detrimental effect on the existing pattern of development. Furthermore, from what I have seen and read, I have found there to be no public benefits of the proposed development which would outweigh the significant harm I have identified. Therefore, the proposal would detract from the character and appearance of the property and its locality.
9. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would have a materially harmful effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would therefore be contrary to saved Policies HD20 and H15 of the Harrogate District Local Plan, Policy SG4 of the Core Strategy and the supplementary planning guidance within the Council's House Extensions and Garages Design Guide (September 2005). Amongst other matters, these policies and guidance seek to ensure that development has no significant detrimental effect on the character and appearance of its surroundings.

Conclusion

10. For the above reasons, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andrew McCormack

INSPECTOR