The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 January 2017

by Rory Cridland LLB (Hons), Solicitor

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

Decision date: 23 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/D3315/D/16/3163907
8 Blagdon Crescent, Taunton TA1 4TQ

- 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 James Russell against the decision of Taunton Deane Borough Council.
- The application Ref 52/16/0016, dated 20 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 3 October 2016.
- The development proposed is single storey extension to the rear and first floor extension over the existing garage.

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 existing dwelling and that of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located in a residential street consisting of detached dwellings with integral garages which sit forward of the main elevation. Although some of the properties on this side of the street benefit from minor alterations to the front, there is a general sense of uniformity and variations in appearance are mostly minimal.

4. Policy DM1 of the Taunton Deane Core Strategy[1] (CS) requires proposals for new development to, amongst other things, ensure that the appearance and character of any street scene would not be unacceptably harmed. In addition, Policy H17 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan 2004 (LP) permits extensions provided they do not harm the form and character of the original dwelling and are subservient to it in scale and design.

5. The proposal would involve the erection of a ground floor extension to the rear and a first floor extension with dormer structure above the existing garage. Although the Council have not raised any concerns regarding the rear extension, they consider the first floor side extension would detract from the character of the existing dwelling and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

[1] Taunton Dean Borough Council Core Strategy 2011-2028

6. I agree with those concerns. At present, the garage is set forward of the main dwelling, a design feature which is replicated in the neighbouring properties and which makes a positive contribution to the general sense of uniformity in the street. However, the proposed first floor extension would result in a 2 storey projecting structure alongside the main elevation. It would appear as a significant addition to the property and would increase both its bulk and scale. In doing so, it would emphasise the differences in setback between the main elevation and that of the extension, resulting in an awkward appearance that would materially harm the form and character of the original building.

7. In addition, the proposed extension would appear in stark contrast to the neighbouring dwellings, extending the existing elevation and introducing a design which would appear out of keeping with its surroundings. It would significantly erode the existing sense of uniformity within the street and result in an unacceptable level of harm to the wider street scene. Likewise, while I acknowledge that the proposed lean-to roof would mirror that of the section of existing roof formed by the previous porch, as a design feature it would nevertheless appear out of keeping with the neighbouring dwellings. This would further erode both the character of the existing building and that of the wider street scene.

8. Although I note the appellant considers the porch extension to the front would be more incongruous than the proposed extension, I do not agree that this would be the case. The porch to the front is a modest structure which, in view of its size, has only a limited impact on the character and appearance of the existing property and the wider surroundings. As such, any harm remains within acceptable levels and I do not consider that it provides a justifiable precedent for the development proposed.

9. Consequently I find the proposal would be harmful to the character of the dwelling and have an unacceptably harmful impact on the street scene. As such, it would be contrary to LP Policy H17 and CS Policy DM1.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Rory Cridland

INSPECTOR