
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 January 2017

by Elaine Benson BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 27 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Y2810/D/16/3164352

36 New Croft, Weedon, Northamptonshire NN7 4RJ

- 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 Saunders against the decision of Daventry District Council.
 - The application Ref DA/2016/0782, dated 10 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 13 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension to include storage area below.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property (No 36) is a 2 storey semi-detached house on an irregularly shaped corner plot at the junction of New Croft and one of its cul-de-sacs of the same name. The extension would be angled to 'turn the corner' and most of it would be orientated away from the front elevation of the existing house. It is proposed to build storage areas, including an open passage running from the front to the rear of the extension, beneath the ground floor rooms of the extension to take advantage of the difference in levels across the site.
 4. The majority of the extension would be over 3 levels and it would be significantly taller than the existing house when measured from ground level. The front elevation of the extension would also be wider than No 36. Because of its height and mass the resulting extension would amount to a disproportionately sized addition to No 36. Furthermore, the stepping down of the extension from the main house and the resulting lower ridge height does not minimise the overall massing or visual dominance of the extension successfully. The significant difference in ground levels next to No 36 means that the general guidance on stepping down at roof level set out in the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance: Designing House Extensions (SPG) is not directly applicable to the 3 storey element of this appeal proposal.
 5. The fact that the extension would be set back around 2.6m from the main frontage of No 36 and would be orientated away from the front of the house would not minimise the scale, massing or appearance of the resulting
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- development as the appellant suggests and therefore does not affect these conclusions.
6. The open passage would not have a domestic appearance, but would introduce an incongruous feature into No 36 and the streetscene. It is intended to use matching materials and window design for the majority of the windows. However, the design of the master bedroom front window which would extend from the 1st floor into the roof across the eaves would be most uncharacteristic in this location. The extension would also unbalance the appearance of the pair of semi-detached houses. Notwithstanding that there is some limited design variety in the locality, the proposed extension would be out of context with its neighbours which comprise traditional dwellings of 1 and 2 storeys and would harm the wider street scene.
 7. As the appellant indicates, the footprint of the extended house would result in a plot ratio of some 25% which in some circumstances might be acceptable. However, No 36 stands on a corner plot with a significant area of land to the front of the house and the site of the proposed extension. Plot ratio has to be considered alongside other factors including the effect of the proposed development on its surroundings. In this appeal, the design and scale of the proposed extension is the main issue, rather than the resulting site coverage.
 8. The proposed additional floor space would undoubtedly enlarge and improve the quality of indoor space for the appellant. It is likely that concerns relating to access and highway issues could have been addressed by conditions had the scheme been otherwise acceptable, thereby securing compliance with criteria B and C of saved Daventry District Local Plan (LP) Policy GN2. There were no objections to the appeal proposal from Weedon Bec Parish Council or local residents. Nonetheless, these factors do not justify unacceptable development.
 9. I conclude overall that the proposed side extension would have an unbalanced and dominating design and scale that would be out of character with the host building, the pair of semi-detached houses and the design of buildings in the locality. It would amount to an incongruous development which would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
 10. For these reasons, the proposed extension would be contrary to the Council's policies which promote good design and local distinctiveness, as set out in saved LP Policies GN2 (A) and EN42 (A, B and C) and Policy S10 (i) of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. These policies are consistent with the design aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). The proposal would also amount to development of a poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. In accordance with Paragraph 64 of the Framework it should be refused.
 11. I have had regard to all other matters raised, however they do not affect the conclusions I have set out. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

Elaine Benson

INSPECTOR