

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 March 2017

by Timothy C King (BA Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 7 April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/V2825/D/17/3168397

21 Buchanan Close, Northampton, NN4 8RA

- 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 Lee Heffron against the decision of Northampton Borough Council.
 - The application Ref N/2016/0993, dated 19 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is '*Demolish existing detached garage. Add new two-storey extension with new garage.*'
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two-storey extension, involving the demolition of an existing garage at 21 Buchanan Close, Northampton, NN4 8RA, in accordance with the terms of the application ref N/2016/0993 dated 19 July 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing Nos. 1044/1 and 1044/2.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural Matter

2. In my decision I have slightly altered the proposal's description to better focus on the development involved.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property comprises a detached single-family dwellinghouse, whose flank wall faces onto Buchanan Close, and a detached single width garage which lies beyond the dwelling's frontage; its front door facing the cul de sac. It is proposed that the house be extended at two-storey height which would
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- necessitate the garage's demolition and would effectively create a L-shaped dwelling. The new flank end would be chamfered to reflect that of the existing roof form.
5. Buchanan Close has, along it, a number of recently built two-storey dwellings, not necessarily of a common style and also with a variation in front building lines. Nonetheless, the Council has refused planning permission on the basis that it considers the proposed development would represent an incongruous and discordant within the streetscene. The proposed projection would, though, be particularly significant and, at my site visit, I did not witness any other such examples in the immediate locality. However, I am also mindful that the extension would be set into the site, back from the edge of the footway.
 6. Policies E20 and H18 of the Northampton Local Plan (NLP), which I find most relevant to this appeal, both require that, amongst other things, new development should reflect the character of the surrounding area. The latter Policy is specifically concerned with residential extensions and also requires that the design and appearance of the proposed extension is in keeping with that of the original dwelling. Such advice is also reflected in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 'Residential Extensions and Alterations Design Guide' (SPD) which advises that front extensions should leave sufficient space between the extension and the front boundary so as not to be obtrusive or overly dominant.
 7. In this particular instance, due to the set back from the footway, the positioning of the existing dwelling and also a tall hedge to the opposite side boundary, views towards the proposed extension would be partially hidden both eastwards and westwards along Buchanan Close. I accept, though, that the extension would be readily visible by occupiers of the dwellings directly opposite the site, but that does not necessarily mean that the proposed extension to the dwelling, adding significant bulk thereto, would be unacceptable in its contextual setting. The profile and ridgeline of the dwelling would be followed, the dwelling's reconfiguration would allow for a frontage facing the street and a conditional approval would ensure that the external materials used would match those existing. Indeed, I consider that the site is capable of satisfactorily accommodating the intended development without visual detriment to either the streetscene or the dwelling itself. The variance of local character would not be compromised as a result.
 8. I thereby conclude that the proposal would not be harmful to the character and appearance of either the host dwelling or its surrounding area, and there would be no material conflict with the aims and requirements of NLP Policies E20 and H18 or relevant advice within the Council's SPD.
 9. For the above reasons given, and having had regard to all matters raised, the appeal succeeds. In terms of conditions, in the interests of certainty, I impose a condition requiring that the development be implemented in accordance with the approved plans. Also, to ensure a satisfactory appearance, a condition is imposed requiring the use of matching materials.

Timothy C King

INSPECTOR