
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 April 2017

by Nick Palmer BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

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

Decision date: 19th April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L2630/D/17/3166579

9A Lynch Green, Hethersett, Norwich NR9 3JU

- 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 Studio UrbanBlu Ltd against the decision of South Norfolk District Council.
 - The application Ref 2016/1669, dated 18 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 11 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is a house extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a house extension at 9A Lynch Green, Hethersett, Norwich NR9 3JU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2016/1669, dated 18 July 2016, subject to the conditions set out in the attached schedule.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Studio UrbanBlu Ltd against South Norfolk District Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in the appeal are the effects of the proposal on:
 - i) the character and appearance of the area; and
 - ii) the living conditions of adjacent occupants.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. Lynch Green is a residential road within the settlement of Hethersett which comprises houses and bungalows of various designs. The dwellings are generally informally sited in relation to the road which has a curved alignment in the vicinity of the site. The appeal property is a bungalow which is long and narrow with a tapering form reflecting the reducing width of the plot towards the rear. It is adjacent to a two storey house on one side and a bungalow on the other.
 5. The proposed extension would be above the existing dwelling to create a first floor. This would be of a contemporary design and the frontage of the dwelling would be re-modelled. At the front there would be a fully glazed gabled feature which would project forward of the existing wall at first floor level.
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There would be a separate gabled roof across the central part of the dwelling and these two elements would be linked. The extension would provide roof lights allowing natural light to be gained at ground floor level. The existing dwelling has a plain traditional appearance which would be completely altered but this would not be out of character in the context of the variety of styles and forms in the area.

6. The front part of the extension would occupy only part of the width of the dwelling and the link between the two main elements would be stepped in further from the side of the dwelling. Because the form of the extension would be split into two main elements its apparent bulk and scale would be proportionate and not top-heavy. The glazed treatment of the frontage would also be complimentary in this respect. In the context of the informal siting of dwellings relative to the road the forward projection of the front gable would not be unduly intrusive. For these reasons and given that the site is adjacent to a number of two storey houses the proposal would not be dominant or out of character.
7. By allowing natural light into the central part of the dwelling which currently has little such light the proposal would significantly improve the accommodation. For the reasons given I find that its design would relate well to the existing dwelling and its surroundings and that it would accord with Policy 2 of the Joint Core Strategy¹ in terms of the design being of a high standard. I conclude on this main issue that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the area. It would integrate with its surroundings and for these reasons would accord with policies DM3.4 and DM3.8 of the South Norfolk Local Plan Development Management Policies (DMP) (2015).

Living Conditions

8. Interested parties have raised concerns that the proposal would obstruct light to windows in the adjacent properties on either side. The Council's second reason for refusal concerns the overbearing effect of the proposal on the outlook from those windows rather than any specific impact on sunlight or daylight.
9. The adjacent house (Nº 9) is set back from the front of the appeal dwelling and is at an angle to it. That house has front facing windows and a glazed side door to the rear which I understand is to a kitchen. The adjacent bungalow at Nº 11 has two small side windows to a front lounge and a larger side window which lights a kitchen.
10. The front windows in Nº 9 would be some distance away from the front part of the extension and at an angle to it and the relationship of that house to the appeal property would ensure that there would be no unduly harmful effect in terms of outlook or loss of light. There is no information before me to demonstrate that the kitchen in that property depends on the side door for its outlook or light but in any case the proposal would be unlikely to have any materially detrimental effect because of the position of the proposed extension and its degree of separation from that door.

¹ Greater Norwich Development Partnership Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (2011 and 2014)

11. The two small lounge windows in Nº 11 are secondary windows and I saw that there is a bay window to the front which would continue to provide light and outlook to that room. The outlook from the kitchen in that property is already onto the side wall of the bungalow. Because the proposed first floor elements would be varied and stepped back from the boundary I find that they would not result in undue loss of light or unacceptably affect the outlook from that window.
12. For these reasons I conclude that the proposal would not harm the living conditions of the adjacent occupants and would accord with policies DM3.4 and DM3.13 of the DMP which require that there is no unacceptable impact in this respect.

Other Matters

13. I have had regard to all other comments made. The Council's report to its Development Management Committee noted that any disruption from construction work would be temporary and that the frontage parking would be sufficient for the dwelling as proposed to be enlarged and these matters did not form part of the reasons for refusal. I see no reason to take a different view.
14. Neighbours have expressed concern that it may be necessary to use adjoining properties to gain access during construction. This would be a private matter to be resolved between the appellant and the neighbours.

Conditions

15. I have imposed conditions requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans to ensure certainty and for external materials to be approved by the Council to ensure the appearance of the development is acceptable.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Nick Palmer

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 05 Rev C, 06 and 07.
- 3) No development shall take place above slab level until details, including samples and colours where required, of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall take place in accordance with the approved details.