
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 May 2017

by Ian McHugh Dip TP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 22 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L2820/D/17/3168743

Spinney House, 75a Warkton Lane, Barton Seagrave, Kettering, NN15 5AB

- 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 Mrs J Blundell against the decision of Kettering Borough Council.
 - The application Ref KET/2016/0857, dated 29 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 23 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side extension and a single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey side extension and a single storey rear extension at Spinney House, 75a Warkton Lane, Barton Seagrave, Kettering, NN15 5AB, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref KET/2016/0857, dated 29 November 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: 1:1250 scale Location Plan; 1:500 scale Block Plan; Drawing Numbers: 216/018/01; 216/018/02; 216/018/03; 216/018/04; 216/018/05 Rev A; 216/018/06 Rev A; 216/018/07; and 216/018/08 Rev A.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the streetscene and the existing dwelling.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a double-fronted two storey modern dwelling, which is situated within a relatively large garden in a residential area. The side elevation of the building faces Warkton Lane, which is a busy main road. Its access is
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taken from a narrow crescent-shaped access road, which leads to the front of the property. This road also serves six other detached houses.

5. Dwellings in the vicinity of the site vary in size, age and appearance. The majority face Warkton Lane and are set back from the highway, with front gardens that are generally enclosed by low walls, fences or hedges. The appeal property is partially screened by trees and vegetation when approaching from both directions along Warkton Lane and, although its side elevation is closer to Warkton Lane than most other properties in the vicinity, it is not particularly prominent in the streetscene.
6. The proposal is to construct a two storey side extension with a gabled front, which would extend the property towards Warkton Lane. In addition, a single storey rear extension is proposed across the full width of the property, including at the rear of the two storey extension. These extensions would provide kitchen, breakfast and utility space on the ground floor, with a new bedroom, dressing area and en-suite at first floor level.
7. Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031 (CS) requires (amongst other things) new development to respond to the site's context and local character. This is consistent with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which states that planning should seek to secure high quality design (paragraph 17) and requires development to reflect the identity of local surroundings (paragraph 58).
8. The proposal would add significantly to the mass of the existing dwelling and it would bring the side elevation closer to Warkton Lane by some 4m. In that regard, the appeal property would be even closer to the Lane than the majority of other dwellings in the immediate vicinity. Consequently, there would be some conflict with the CS and with the Framework, as it would not follow the general form and pattern of development in the area.
9. However, there would still be a gap of approximately 4m between the new side wall of the dwelling and the boundary of the site. In addition, the screening effect of existing vegetation, together with the relatively wide highway verge would also help to reduce the visual impact of the proposal when viewed from both directions along Warkton Lane. I note that the side elevation of the extensions facing the road would be blank i.e. with no windows. However for the reasons given above, I am not persuaded that this would be unacceptable. Accordingly, I consider that the proposal would not be unduly harmful to the streetscene.
10. With regard to the effect on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, I acknowledge that the proposal would result in a substantial increase in the size of the property and that its appearance would alter significantly. However, there are other large detached houses on this section of Warkton Lane and, in my view, the resultant dwelling on the appeal site would not appear at odds with these neighbouring properties. Furthermore, the design and appearance of the extensions would be in keeping with the existing dwelling, in terms of materials and roof pitch. In addition, I consider that the projecting front gable would provide visual interest and this would help to break up the overall mass of the building. Accordingly, I conclude that the proposal would not be harmful to the character or appearance of the existing dwelling.

Conditions

11. The Council has suggested conditions in the event of the appeal being allowed. These have been considered in the light of the advice contained within the Planning Practice Guidance. A condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans is necessary, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
12. To ensure a satisfactory appearance, a condition requiring the use of external materials to match the existing dwelling is also necessary.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, it is concluded that the appeal should be allowed.

Ian McHugh

INSPECTOR