
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 June 2020

by S Harley BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI ARICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/G2815/D/20/3251651

7 Westfields, Easton on the Hill PE9 3LY

- 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 and Mrs Mistry against the decision of East Northamptonshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00250/FUL, dated 21 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 24 April 2020.
 - The development is described on the planning application form as proposed extensions and alterations to dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for extensions and alterations to dwelling at 7 Westfields, Easton on the Hill PE9 3LY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/00250/FUL, dated 21 February 2020, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following 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: MIS/20/0757/2 and MIS/20/0757/3.
 - 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

2. The main issue for this appeal is the effect of the proposed extensions on the character and appearance of the street scene and the semi-detached houses Nos 5-7 Westfields.

Reasons

3. Westfields is a predominantly residential street. Due to its varied house types, roof forms, and setbacks from the street, it does not have a specific distinctive visual character. Many of the building blocks are symmetrical. Prominent design features of many of the semi-detached houses, including a pair at the gateway to the street and Nos 5-7 Westfield, are the symmetrical hip/catslide roofs at each end. The proposed side extension would replace the hip/catslide roof at No 7 with a hipped roof and would continue the ground floor side wall up to the eaves.

4. The side elevation of the appeal property is prominent because Nos 9-13 (odds) are set significantly further back from the edge of the street than No 7. However, the proposed materials, angle of roof slope, ridge and eaves heights would match the existing which weigh in favour of the proposal. Moreover, Nos 5-7 are situated between the local shop, a detached two storey building with a gable roof and wrap around ground extension, and a short asymmetrical row of terraced houses, with a side/catslide roof at the end nearest No 7, and a pitched roof with gable roof wall at the other end (following partial demolition enabling the construction of The Brambles). The proposals would mean that Nos 5-7 would no longer appear as a symmetrical block but, in this particular case, this would not be so significantly at odds with the form and appearance of the immediately adjoining asymmetrical buildings as to warrant withholding permission for this reason.
5. The Council raises no objections to the rear extensions or to the porch on its own and I see no reason to come to a different conclusion. The porch would further reduce symmetry, but even taken together with the first floor side extension, there would be insufficient harm to the character and appearance of the semi-detached properties or the surrounding built environment to justify withholding permission.
6. Moreover, the appellants have pointed out that that extensions could be built under permitted development rights¹ which could also result in a disruption to the symmetry of the semi-detached houses and could affect the character and appearance of the area in an unsympathetic manner. The property is not within a Conservation Area and the Council has not removed permitted development rights: I judge there to be sufficient likelihood that such extensions would be likely to be constructed as to amount to a material consideration in this case.

Conclusion

7. Taking all the above into account I conclude that the proposed extensions would not have a materially harmful effect on the character and appearance of the street scene and the semi-detached houses Nos 5-7 Westfields. Accordingly I find no conflict with Policy 8(d)(i) and (ii) of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2016 or those principles of the National Planning Policy Framework which together seek to ensure developments respond to the local character of the area. I conclude the appeal should be allowed.

Conditions

8. As well as the standard condition specifying the time limits for the commencement of development compliance with the approved plans is necessary to provide certainty. Materials for external surfaces should match those of the existing building in the interests of the appearance of the area. The Council has indicated at 11d of the Questionnaire that no other conditions are necessary so I have imposed none.

S Harley

INSPECTOR

¹ The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015 as amended provides for certain extensions, including roof extensions, to dwellings without the need for a formal planning application.