
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 July 2020

by Bhupinder Thandi BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/F2415/D/20/3249130

31 Bridgewater Drive, Great Glenn LE8 9DX

- 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 Ms S Duncan against the decision of Harborough District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01740/FUL, dated 31 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 24 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is two storey part side and rear extension, single storey part side and part rear extension, garage conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host property and the area; and
 - the effect of the proposed development upon the living conditions of nearby occupants, with particular regard to outlook and loss of privacy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site comprises a detached property located within a modern housing estate. The property is two-storey with a forward gable feature and benefits from a double garage to one side. The appeal property backs onto the garden of No 35 Bridgewater Drive which is a detached bungalow. A cluster of dwellings are located to the south of the appeal property that 'finish off' the cul de sac and back on to a recreation ground. No 25 Bridgewater Drive faces the appeal property.
4. Properties in the area are individual in terms of design and materials, but they largely tend to be detached dwellings with main gable roof designs.
5. The proposal involves a side extension linking into a part two storey, part single storey rear extension. I acknowledge that the side extension would be no wider than the existing double garage and subordinate to the main dwelling. However, the gambrel roof and dormer window are features which are alien to the host property, notwithstanding the low eaves. As such, the side extension

would unacceptably change the dwelling's appearance resulting in an unsympathetic and incongruous addition to the host property. Whilst extensions over garages may well be commonplace it does not outweigh the harm that I have identified.

6. The proposed rear extension extending across the entire width of the property would unduly dominate the rear of the dwelling individually and taken together with the side extension, notwithstanding the retention of the main gable feature and the space to the sides of the dwelling. The breaking up of the elements of the overall proposal creates visual confusion and seriously undermines the appearance of the dwelling.
7. I note that a proportion of the garden would be retained. However, the extent of the remaining garden does not justify an uncharacteristically large addition to the dwelling.
8. Whilst the property benefits from some screening, the proposed development would be apparent from localised views from the footpath leading from the recreation ground and the surrounding area. I note that properties in the area display variety in terms of design. However, the proposal would be unacceptably at odds with the appearance of properties in Bridgewater Close. I therefore find that it would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.
9. As such the proposal would be contrary to Policy GD8 of the Harborough Local Plan (2019) (LP) which, amongst other things, requires a high standard of design that respects and enhances local character and distinctiveness. It would also be contrary to Policy GC6 of the Great Glen Neighbourhood Plan (2017) (NP) which, amongst other things, requires new development to enhance and reinforce local distinctiveness and the character of the area.

Living conditions of existing occupiers

10. I note that the proposed side extension would be taller and would have a greater depth than the existing garage. However, in my view, there is sufficient separation between No 25 and the appeal property to ensure satisfactory living conditions and outlook for the occupants of No 25.
11. I acknowledge that there is a degree of mutual overlooking and a closer spatial relationship between properties in the area. I also note that there is disagreement between the main parties regarding the distance between the proposed extension and the rear boundary. Nonetheless, in my judgement, due to the closeness of the extension to the rear boundary there would be a significant degree of overlooking of No 35's amenity space from the proposed first floor window. This relationship would result in an unacceptable loss of privacy for the existing occupiers of No 35.
12. Notwithstanding the distance of the two storey element to the corner of No 35, I find that the height, massing and position of the rear extension in close proximity to the boundary would be visually intrusive and would diminish the living conditions of existing occupiers in terms of outlook, notwithstanding the proposed hipped roof design of the two storey element. The proximity of the proposal would therefore have a significant overbearing effect on the occupants of this property and their rear garden.

13. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policy GD8 of the LP which seeks to ensure that new development is designed to minimise the impact on the amenity of existing residents by not having a significant adverse impact on the living conditions of existing residents. It would also be contrary to Policy GC6 of the NP which, amongst other things, requires proposals to minimise the impact on general amenity.

Other Matters

14. The appellant has submitted a Certificate of Lawful Development application for extensions and alterations to the host property and a separate planning application for alternative proposals to the appeal scheme. I note, however, that both applications have been refused by the Council.
15. The appellant contends that the property benefits from permitted development rights under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).
16. I acknowledge that permitted development rights pertaining to extensions and alterations to the dwelling and its roof may well exist. However, based on the evidence before me I am not satisfied that a reasonable fallback scheme exists. As such, I afford this matter limited weight in coming to my decision.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons set out above the appeal does not succeed.

B Thandi

INSPECTOR