
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 August 2020 by John Gunn DipTP Dip DBE MRTPI

Decision by R C Kirby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/H2835/D/20/3251024

27 The Headlands, Wellingborough NN8 4RT

- 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 Christine Farrelly against the decision of Borough Council of Wellingborough.
 - The application Ref WP/20/00095/FUL, dated 12 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 2 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is demolition of rear existing extension. New rear ground floor extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for demolition of rear existing extension. New rear ground floor extension at 27 The Headlands, Wellingborough NN8 4RT in accordance with the terms of application Ref WP/20/00095/FUL, dated 12 February 2020 and the following conditions:
 1. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 2. 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.
 3. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with: Drawing No. 180449-P-001 Revision B and Drawing No. 180449-P-002 Revision B

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matter

3. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the planning application form. However, in Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed but, nevertheless, a different wording has been entered. In particular I note that the amended description makes reference to 're-submission with changes'. This is not an act

of development and accordingly, I have used the description given on the original application.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal property is a detached bungalow located within a suburban residential area. The area is characterised by a mix of semi-detached houses and bungalows, with a limited range of house designs and materials. The properties are set back a short distance from the highway with landscaped front gardens, enclosed by low walls.
6. The proposal would introduce a large extension to a modest sized bungalow resulting in the depth of the host property being increased significantly. National and local policy and guidance requires, amongst other things, for development to preserve or improve the character of the surrounding area with regard to scale, layout, design, and external materials. Moreover, the Borough Council of Wellingborough, Residential Extensions - A Guide to Good Design Supplementary Planning Guidance II (SPG) indicates that the size, materials, roof shape and other design features are key elements that should be considered in order to ensure that residential extensions reflect and enhance the appearance of the existing dwelling. Whilst acknowledging that the SPG assists applicants in formulating their proposals it does not provide specific guidance in relation to rear extensions and is silent on the scale of development that would be acceptable. Consequently, a judgement has to be made on the acceptability of the proposal, in design terms, on its own individual merits.
7. The proposal would sit at the rear of the host property, at a lower level than the neighbouring property at No 25 and would be screened from the south by an existing garage/outbuilding. As a result, the visual impact of the long side wall of the extended host property would be limited. When viewed from No 29 the extension would be seen against the backdrop of the existing garage/outbuildings and rising ground to the south and in this context it would not appear dominant.
8. The extension would be at a lower height than the host property and the individual design features and materials proposed would be in keeping with the design of the existing bungalow. It would sit within a large garden and would not take up a disproportionately large part of the appeal site. Consequently, I find that the proposal would not be harmful to the character or appearance of the host property.
9. The part of The Headlands in which the appeal property sits contains properties with large rear landscaped gardens, backing onto Harrowden Road and separated by low fences. This gives the area an open character. On my site visit I noted examples of garages and outbuildings at neighbouring properties that projected a modest distance into the rear gardens. The proposal would not

extend beyond these buildings and consequently the open character of the area would be retained. Whilst it is acknowledged that the extension would be visible from the neighbouring properties it would have very limited visibility from The Headlands and would not be visible from Harrowden Road due to the topography of the ground and existing vegetation. As a result, the proposal would not appear as an obtrusive feature in the streetscene. Consequently, harm to the character and appearance of the area would not occur.

10. In light of the above I conclude that the proposal would complement the host building and the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with Policy 8 (d) (i) and (ii) of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. There would be no conflict with the SPG or the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Design Guide. These policies and guidance collectively require, amongst other things, for development to complement or enhance the character of the surrounding area with regard to scale, layout, density, mass, design, materials and architectural features.

Other Matters

11. The new extension would be constructed on the party boundary with the attached bungalow and set off the boundary with the No 25. Although the extension would be visible from the rear windows of the attached property, I am satisfied that its limited rearward projection along the party boundary would be such that the current open outlook down this property's rear garden would not be affected by the proposal.
12. The Council's report indicates that a neighbour within the vicinity of the site is concerned that the proposal would affect light to their garden. I have not been provided with a copy of this letter, but it appears that the Council has addressed the impact of the proposal on No 29, and so shall I. Given the orientation of the new extension relative to the rear garden of No 29 and its scale, I find that the proposal would be unlikely to result in a loss of light to this area to a degree that would make the garden space less pleasant to use. Harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of this property would be unlikely to occur as a result.
13. The extension would be located some distance from the party boundary with No 25, and given the position and design of it, relative to windows within this property would ensure that it would not be overbearing or harmful to the outlook from this property. It is noteworthy that the Council found similarly respect of these matters.
14. Although concern has been raised about the proposal undermining the foundations of a nearby property, it is unclear as to which property this relates. Moreover, no evidence has been submitted to substantiate this concern, which in any event is likely to be controlled under different legislation. This is not a determining issue in this case.

Conditions

15. The Council has suggested several conditions it would wish to see imposed in the event that the appeal was allowed. I have considered these against the guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance.

16. To ensure that the development is undertaken as approved a condition referring to the approved plans is necessary. The plans and application form are not specific as to the materials that are being proposed therefore a condition requiring materials to match the existing property is necessary to protect the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion and Recommendation

17. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed subject to the conditions set out above.

J Gunn

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

18. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is allowed with the recommended conditions.

RC Kirby

INSPECTOR