



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 August 2020

by Chris Forrett BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/H2835/W/20/3251942

120 Windsor Road, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire NN8 2NB

- 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 Andy Spokes against the decision of Borough Council of Wellingborough.
 - The application Ref WP/20/00093/FUL, dated 11 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 21 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of single storey side extension and attached shed, and erection of attached 2 storey 1 bed dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council have described the proposal as the demolition of single storey side extension and attached shed and erection of attached part 2 storey, part single storey 1 bedroom dwelling with a new dropped kerb, boundary fences and two parking spaces on its decision notice. The Appellant has also utilised this description on their appeal form. Given that this revised description accurately describes the proposal I have determined the appeal on the basis of the revised description.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located in a residential area of Wellingborough which generally consists of two storey properties. Windsor Road is a linear road but has a number of small cul-de-sacs off it, which are also known as Windsor Road. The appeal site itself fronts onto one of these cul-de-sacs, but is located at the corner of the main part of Windsor Road. The topography of the land rises along the main section of Windsor Road in broadly an east to west direction.
5. Along the main part of Windsor Road there is a clearly defined building line which forms part of the character of the area. That said, where properties face onto one of the cul-de-sacs, and are located on the corner of the main road, they are set slightly further away from the main road than other properties.

6. The appeal proposal would introduce a new two-storey dwelling between the existing dwelling and the main part of Windsor Road. This would be located much closer to the main part of Windsor Road than any of the other development in the area and as such would form an unacceptably prominent feature in the wider streetscene. This would be particularly the case when viewed from the east looking up the hill as not only would the dwelling be sited much closer to the road, but the rising gradient would exacerbate its prominence.
7. In coming to the above view, I acknowledge that there are some single storey extensions in the area to the road frontage, including those at the appeal site. However, these do not have such a significant impact on the streetscene as the two-storey development before me. Consequently, the removal of the existing extension does not provide a reason why planning permission should be granted for a much more substantial development.
8. The Council has also referred to the proposal as being an overdevelopment of the site. However, there is no suggestion that the proposal does not incorporate all of the necessary facilities to enable the future occupiers to undertake all of the activities normally associated with the size of the dwelling.
9. Finally, the Council has raised concern that the proposal would unbalance the symmetry of the immediate streetscene and in particular the pairs of semi-detached dwellings. In this respect I find that the overall design of the proposal is consistent with the existing development in the area and that a two-storey addition is not so harmful as to warrant the refusal of planning permission on this ground. That said, neither of these factors provide a compelling reason why planning permission should be granted, especially given the harm I have found to the streetscene as a whole.
10. For the above reasons the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area and would conflict with Policy 8(d) (i) and (ii) of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031 (2016) which amongst other matters seeks to ensure that proposals create a distinctive local character by responding to the sites immediate context, including its topography and overall form. It would also be at odds with the overarching aims of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other matters

11. I have also considered that the development would create an additional much needed dwelling and that the existing three-bedroom dwelling would become available for other occupation. Whilst this is a benefit of the proposal, this is not a factor which outweighs the harm I have identified above.
12. Additionally, from the evidence before me, the appeal site is located in the zone of influence of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA) which is a European designated site. The Council have indicated that a financial payment of £269.44 has been received which is required to secure mitigation against recreational disturbance as any intensification of activities could lead to further disturbance in accordance with the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document (2015). With that in mind, the Appellant has already made such a payment directly to the Council.

13. Notwithstanding that, I am conscious of the requirement to undertake an 'Appropriate Assessment' of the effects of the development on this designated site. However, given that I have found harm in respect of the character and appearance of the area, and that there are no other planning reasons which indicate that permission should be granted, it is not necessary for me to consider this matter in any further detail.

Conclusion

14. Taking all matters into consideration, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Chris Forrett

INSPECTOR