



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 September 2020

by M Russell BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/G2815/D/20/3253815

15 Williams Way, Higham Ferrers, Northants NN10 8AJ

- 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 Stephen Kennedy against the decision of East Northants District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00298/FUL, dated 29 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 27 April 2020.
 - The development proposed was originally described as insulation of garage, work is internal only, no external change.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for conversion of garage to games room (no external works proposed) at 15 Williams Way, Higham Ferrers, Northants NN10 8AJ, in accordance with application Ref. 20/00298/FUL, dated 29 February 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - (1) The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.
 - (2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the 1:1250 site location plan and the plans titled 'Floor plan proposed and existing' which indicate the building to be converted.

Procedural Matter

2. The description on the planning application form is not a description of development and I have summarised it in the interests of brevity in the above heading. However, for the purposes of my decision, I have used the more accurate and concise description on the Council's decision notice.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether or not the proposal would give rise to inconvenience for road users on Williams Way arising from additional demand for on-street parking.

Reasons

4. The Northamptonshire Parking Standards (2016) (the Standards) sets out that for new dwellings with 4+ bedrooms the provision of parking should be '3 spaces per dwelling, plus visitor spaces at 1 per dwelling across the development'. However, I am mindful that this is guidance and from the

evidence before me, the Council does not have any adopted parking standards relating to existing dwellings.

5. The front elevation of the garage incorporates two single garage doors and a central dividing brick column. My attention has been drawn to the fact that the internal dimensions of the garage are below the dimensions for a double garage set out in the Standards. From what I saw on site, I consider it likely that the width of the door openings and the depth of the garage is likely to be restrictive and would not encourage its use for parking purposes. The guidance in the Standards acknowledges under 'Garages' that such issues often occur and that for this reason garages are not included as designated parking within developments.
6. There are limited opportunities for parking outside the curtilage of the dwelling on the private drive that it is accessed off. However, the dwelling would retain driveway space for the parking of two vehicles. Furthermore, although only a snapshot of the availability of on-street parking in the area, I noted on my site visit that there were opportunities for parking on the adopted highway further along Williams Way. On the basis of these considerations, I am not persuaded that the conversion of the garage to a games room would result in a discernible increase in on-street parking above the existing situation.
7. I conclude that the development would be unlikely to give rise to inconvenience for road users on Williams Way having regard to the existing site circumstances. In that regard the proposal would comply with Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2016) which amongst other things seeks to ensure there is satisfactory provision for parking.

Other Matter

8. I note the written representation made in respect of the need for soundproofing. Given the building would be used ancillary to the residential use of the site, it is unlikely that any activity would result in a significant change to the domestic noise environment. There are separate powers under environmental health legislation to investigate such matters should they arise.

Conditions

9. I attach the standard timescale condition and an approved plans condition in the interests of clarity. The Council's appeal questionnaire suggests a materials condition be attached. However, the plans confirm that no external works are proposed. Such a condition is therefore not necessary in this instance.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons set out, the appeal is allowed.

M Russell

INSPECTOR