



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 August 2020

by M Aqbal BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/V2825/W/20/3248396

47 Beech Avenue, Northampton NN3 2HE

- 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 J Julyan against the decision of Northampton Borough Council.
 - The application Ref N/2019/1524, dated 15 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 28 February 2020.
 - The development proposed is erection of detached single storey dwelling.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are: a) the effects of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, and b) whether the proposed dwelling would offer satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property comprises a garage located between dwellings at 45 and 47 Beech Avenue, along a mainly residential road. This incorporates predominantly 1930s semi-detached dwellings with some subtle variations in styles and detailing. Most notably, these dwellings are two-storey with similar and proportionate fenestration arrangements which give the streetscene a degree of visual consistency.
4. Although the existing garage at the appeal site is detached from 47 Beech Avenue (no 47), its single storey form and utilitarian design are consistent with its function. Along with this, there is some similarity in the brickwork and boundary treatments between the garage and no 47. Consequently, the garage appears as a subordinate outbuilding that is settled within the streetscene.
5. In contrast, and despite the inclusion of a defensible frontage and landscaping, as a new single-storey dwelling with a flat roof, it would not reflect the prevailing scale and form of dwellings in the area. Moreover, when viewed from the highway, the principal elevation of the new dwelling would be dominated by its glazed fenestration and door which is uncharacteristic of dwellings in the area. Therefore, due to its scale, form and design the proposed dwelling would

significantly detract from the prevailing pattern of development in the area and would appear visually incongruous.

6. Consequently, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, I find conflict with the design aims of Policies H1 and S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (CS) and Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan (LP). Taken together, amongst other things, these require that for new developments consideration is given to the location and setting of the site and that they reflect the character of the area in terms of form and scale to enhance the built environment.

Living conditions

7. Irrespective of the proposed dwelling meeting the requirements of the Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard (March 2015), bedroom 2 would be served only by a rooflight. Whilst this would provide some daylight and ventilation to the room, it would offer a very limited outlook. Indeed, without any windows to walls this room would provide a particularly bleak living space, which would significantly compromise the living conditions of its occupants and reflects a poor layout and design.
8. Whilst roof lights are utilised as a means of daylight and ventilation, these are usually in association with existing properties to facilitate the adaptation of roof spaces or to afford existing rooms additional daylight and ventilation. Such situations are not comparable to a new dwelling where a habitable room does not incorporate at least one window in a wall to provide a satisfactory level of outlook.
9. For the above reasons, the proposed development would fail to provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers. This would be in conflict with Policy H1 of the CS and Policy E20 of the LP, in respect of seeking good design in the interests of safeguarding the living conditions of future residents.

Other Matters

10. The proposal would deliver an additional dwelling in a location which is accessible to a range of services and facilities and would also support housing supply locally. Nonetheless, these along with the social, environmental and economic benefits arising from a single dwelling would be modest and do not outweigh the harm I have already identified and overall conflict with the development plan.
11. Any additional on-street parking spaces created through the removal of the existing dropped kerb for the garage, would be negated by the parking demand from the new dwelling. This, along with the lack of harm to the living conditions of neighbours are neutral factors which do not weigh in favour or against the proposal.

Conclusion

12. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Aqbal

INSPECTOR