



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 October 2020 by G Sibley MPLAN MRTPI

Decision by Susan Ashworth BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/V2825/D/20/3256391

102 Ashby Wood Drive, Northampton, NN5 4DX

- 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 and Mrs P and F Greening against the decision of Northampton Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: N/2020/0101, dated 17 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 1 May 2020.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion with front and rear rooflights.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

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.

Procedural Matters

3. The description of development in the original application form is a descriptive explanation of the position rather than an identification of the operational development. In the interest of clarity, I have considered the proposals on the basis of the description of development taken from the Decision Notice.
4. The appellant has submitted a number of alternative plans for the proposed development with the appeal. The Council and third parties have not been given the opportunity to consider these alternative proposals and for that reason I have determined the appeal based on the plans the Council determined the application on.

Main Issue

- The effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. No.102 is an end terrace dwelling located at the junction between Ashby Wood Drive and Strobel Drive. The run of dwellings are similarly designed with some small variations in their appearance. There are no openings on the front roofslope and each dwelling has a solar panel on the rear roofslope. Across the wider estate there are several dwellings that have solar panels on the front

roofslope but typically they do not have rooflights on the front. Nevertheless, there are examples of dwellings with rear rooflights.

6. Where solar panels have been installed on the front of the property, they are typically found within the roofs of all the dwellings within a specific street or run of terrace dwellings. In this instance, the rooflights would be inserted into just one dwelling within a run. Accordingly, it would appear as an incongruous element on the terrace. Furthermore, given the size of the roof and the size and siting of the proposed rooflights they would have a cluttered appearance. The consistent design approach used in the construction of this run of terrace dwellings positively contributes to the appearance of the street scene. Consequently, for the above reasons, the introduction of rooflights would detract from this positive characteristic of the area.
7. There are already the solar panels on the rear roofslope of the dwellings along Ashby Wood Drive and because of this, additional openings on the rear would not necessarily appear incongruous. Nevertheless, the size and siting of the rooflights on the rear, in addition to the solar panels, would create a cluttered appearance. The dwelling is visible from Strobel Drive and because of this, the cluttered appearance of the roofslope would cause harm to the appearance of the street scene.
8. For the above reasons, the proposed development would introduce an incongruous feature into the front roofslope and would create a cluttered appearance on both the front and rear of the property. Consequently, this would cause harm to the appearance of the host dwelling as well as the character and appearance of the street scene. As such, the proposal would be contrary to saved policy H18 and E20 and of The Northampton Local Plan 1993 – 2006 (Adopted 1997) (LP) which requires the design of any new building or extension to adequately reflect the character of its surroundings in terms of layout, siting, form, scale and use of appropriate materials. The proposal would also not comply with Policy S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) (Adopted 2014) which requires development to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment. As such I conclude that the proposal would not therefore be in accordance with the development plan when considered as a whole.
9. Furthermore, the proposal would also not accord with Council's Supplement Planning Document - Residential Extensions and Alterations Design Guide (Adopted 2011) which notes that additions to the roof should complement the rhythm of the wider street scene and not disrupt the established street scene.

Other Matters

10. I have taken into consideration the appellant's comments about the age of the Northampton Local Plan. Whilst it was adopted a while ago, it seems to me the relevant policies set out above are consistent with the aims of the Framework to achieve well designed places. Accordingly, they are not out of date.
11. I have had regard to various other matters raised by the appellants, including the letters of support, for their need for additional space for their family as well as their business, but from the evidence before me this is not a reason to grant permission in the face of the harm identified. I have considered this appeal scheme on its own particular merits and concluded that it causes harm for the reasons set out above.

Conclusion and Recommendation

12. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Sibley

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report, and, on that basis, I too agree that the appeal should be dismissed.

Susan Ashworth

INSPECTOR