The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 8 December 2020 by S Watson BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

Decision by R C Kirby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/H2835/D/20/3259304
47 Parkins Close, Wellingborough, NN8 2BF

- 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 Constantin against the decision of Wellingborough Borough Council.
- The application Ref WP/20/00426/FUL, dated 17 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 4 September 2020.
- The development proposed is described as a rear extension and roof dormas.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

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

Main Issues

3. The Council considered that the rear single-storey extension caused no adverse impacts and on the basis of the evidence before me I have no reason to reach a contrary view.

4. As such, the main issues in this case are the effect of the proposed dormers on:

   - The character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area; and,
   - The living conditions of neighbouring occupiers by way of privacy and outlook.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

5. The appeal site is part of a relatively modern residential development within a wider residential area. Although the buildings within Parkins Close are somewhat varied, they are predominantly of a very similar, simple style. The row which the appeal site is a part of did not have any dormer windows to the front or rear and the roof scape was uniform. The appeal site itself contains a semi-detached dwelling with a rear garden, the land level of which rises up significantly towards the rear of the site.

6. The proposed dormers to the front and rear of the property, by way of their size and bulky form, would be significant additions disproportionate to the scale of the host property. Moreover, they would substantially cover both of the front and rear roof slopes significantly changing the appearance of the roof. The front dormer would be in a prominent position where it would be incongruous and intrusive within the street scene, especially when seen from an angle where the depth and bulk of the dormer would be most obvious. While the rear dormer would not be visible from the street scene, it would still visible from the rear of neighbouring properties, where it would also appear as a disproportionate addition to the host dwelling, and out of keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

7. While the appellant has referred to examples of dormers being present in the wider area, the appeal site is read within the context of Parkins Close which is discrete from the surrounding streets, and where dormers are not characteristic.

8. Therefore, I conclude that the proposed dormer windows would, by way of their size and form, be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) which requires, amongst other things, that a development should respond to a site's immediate and wider context and local character. The proposal would also conflict with high-quality design requirements of Paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), and the guidance on dormers within the Residential Extensions: A Guide to Good Design supplementary planning guidance.

Living Conditions

9. At the rear of the host dwelling is a single first floor window, serving a bedroom. Due to the change in land levels between Parkins Close and Valley Road, this window is not much higher than the rear ground floor windows, of dwellings on Valley Road. As such, and given the tall fence and garden shed at the end of the appeal garden, I find it likely that there is very little existing overlooking from it to properties on Valley Road.

10. However, the proposed rear dormer would be set at a higher level than this bedroom window, and views from it would be likely to result in a loss of privacy to the rear gardens of nearby bungalows in Valley Road. This would be likely to result in a reduction in occupiers' enjoyment of their gardens.

11. The new dormer windows would be unlikely to result in a material change to the levels of privacy the occupiers of No 45 Parkins Close currently experience because there is a level of overlooking that is present from existing first floor rear windows. The absence of harm in this regard does not diminish the harm identified above.

12. Moreover, I find that neither the front nor the rear dormers would be so large or so close to neighbouring properties, including No 45 Parkins Close and Nos 47 and 49 Valley Road, so as to be intrusive or cause an overbearing impact to the outlook from these properties.

13. In light of the above I conclude that the proposed rear dormer window would cause harm to the living conditions of the opposite neighbouring occupiers in

Valley Road by way of a loss of privacy, in conflict with JCS Policy 8 which seeks to ensure that the amenities of neighbouring occupiers are protected from overlooking, amongst other issues.

Other Matters

14. I note that the appellant is concerned with the way in which the planning application process was carried out. However, this is not a matter for this appeal and should be taken up directly with the Council in the first instance.

15. While I am sure that the additional living accommodation would provide some benefits for the appellant by way of increased family space, this doesn't outweigh the harm identified.

Recommendation

16. For the reasons given above I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Watson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

17. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and concur that the appeal should be dismissed.

R C Kirby

INSPECTOR