
Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 15 June 2021 by John Gunn DipTP, DipDBE, MRTPI

Decision by M Seaton BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/H2835/D/21/3271011

63, Fullwell Road, Bozeat, NN29 7LX

- 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 Michael Jones against the decision of Wellingborough Borough Council.
 - The application Ref NW/21/00023/FUL, dated 22 December 2020, was refused by notice dated 5 March 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Demolition of the existing garage to be replaced with the erection of a two storey side and part rear extension, to include the erection of a single storey rear extension. Erection of a front porch, new bay window. To include new material finishes the front elevation to bring the property to a higher standard'.
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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.

Preliminary Matters

3. The application was determined by Wellingborough Borough Council, which has since become part of a new combined authority, North Northamptonshire Council. The development plans for the individual areas within the new authority remain in force until replaced, and I have therefore determined the appeal on this basis.

Main Issues

4. The effect of the proposed development upon:
 - 1) the character and appearance of the host building and street scene; and,
 - 2) the living conditions of the occupiers of No 61 Fullwell Road, having regard to outlook.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and appearance

5. The appeal site lies in a residential street comprised of semi-detached and detached houses, and bungalows. A varied building line, and regular spacing between buildings, provide a simple and pleasing rhythm to the street. The

- individual properties are set back from the highway and have medium sized landscaped front gardens, incorporating parking facilities. The host property forms part of a pair of semi-detached houses and is similar in design to others within the road.
6. The appeal proposal would introduce a significant extension into the space between the host property and the common boundary with the neighbouring property at No 61 over two storeys. Moreover, it would project forward of the front wall of the host property. It would significantly increase the bulk and massing of the host property and appear prominent and incongruous when viewed from Fullwell Road.
 7. I also find that the proposal, and in particular the substantial projection proposed beyond the front elevation of the existing dwelling, would erode and unbalance the symmetry of the semi-detached pair of houses, of which the host property forms part. Moreover, the proposed development would not be sympathetic to the prevailing local character derived from the generally consistent design approach of the semi-detached pairs of houses observed within the road. It would erode the strong sense of place that exists within this part of Fullwell Road. The proposed development would therefore be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
 8. I acknowledge that the appellant has sought guidance from the Council and has incorporated design features into the gable wall of the two storey side extension in an attempt to reduce the visual mass of the proposed development and avoid a blank façade. However, these changes are relatively minor in nature and do not mitigate the harmful effect of the proposed development that I have identified above.
 9. The appellant has drawn attention to existing extensions to properties within Fullwell Road indicating that they set a precedent for the appeal proposal. During my site visit I saw a number of extensions that have some similarities with the appeal proposals, but in each case the design of the development and its relationship to the host property, and its neighbours, was different to that proposed. Moreover, I am not aware of the circumstances that prevailed when the extensions were built. They do not justify the proposed development or provide good reason for allowing harmful development. In any event, each application and appeal should be determined on its individual merits, and this is the approach that I have adopted.
 10. In light of the above I conclude that the proposed side extension would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. This would be contrary to Policy 8 (d) (i) and (ii) of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031 (CS) and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which jointly seek developments that respond to the site's immediate surroundings and which are appropriate to the local setting and context. Moreover, it would be contrary to the guidance contained within the Residential Extensions – A Guide to Good Design Supplementary Planning Guidance II (SPG) which identifies the key points to consider in order to achieve a successful design.

Living conditions

11. The appeal property sits forward of the neighbouring property at No 61, which is a semi-detached house, with an attached single garage that abuts the common boundary with the appeal property. It has a landscaped front garden.
12. There are several windows in the front elevation of No 61, including a large bay window at ground floor level and bedroom windows at first floor level. Views from these windows would be largely onto the property's front garden. Given the distance and juxtaposition between these windows, and the proposed development, the impact of the proposal on the outlook from the rooms served by these windows would be limited. Consequently, in this regard, the proposed development would be unlikely to result in an unacceptable impact on the rooms that these windows serve.
13. The rear wall of the proposed development would be approximately in line with the rear wall of the garage to No 61, with the main rear elevation of No 61 lying further back. Given this juxtaposition I find that the proposed development would not be visible from any window, that is located within the rear elevation of No 61. Moreover, whilst the proposed development would be visible from the rear garden of No 61, given the relationship between the respective properties, there would only be limited visual impact on it.
14. I have also taken account of the drawing in appendix B of the appellant's statement which shows that the two-storey extension contravenes the '45 degree' code to a small degree. Whilst the '45-degree code' assists in the assessment of the impact of development on neighbouring properties, with regards to sunlight and daylight, from what I have seen on site, the effect on No 61 would be limited and acceptable.
15. Taking these findings together I conclude that the proposed development would not be harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 61. In this regard the proposed development would not conflict with the aims of Policy 8 (e) (i) of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031, or paragraph 127 f) of the Framework, which jointly seek to protect the amenity of nearby occupiers.

Conclusion and Recommendation

16. Whilst I find that the proposed development would not harm the living conditions of the occupiers of No 61, I find that it would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. However, the lack of harm to the living conditions of occupiers of No 61 does not outweigh the significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area that I have identified above.
17. There are no material considerations that indicate the application should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons given above, I therefore recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

John Gunn

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

18. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

M Seaton

INSPECTOR