



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 15 June 2021

by Rachel Hall BSc MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 July 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Y2810/D/21/3269326

5 Drayton Park, Daventry NN11 8TB

- 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 N Soda against the decision of Daventry District Council.
 - The application Ref DA/2020/0804, dated 22 September 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 December 2020.
 - The development proposed is a garage conversion, new single storey garage extension and installation of 2no. velux rooflights to main dwelling roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a garage conversion, new single storey garage extension and installation of 2no. velux rooflights to main dwelling roof at 5 Drayton Park, Daventry NN11 8TB in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DA/2020/0804, dated 22 September 2020, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed side extension on the character and appearance of Drayton Park.

Reasons

3. The individuality of house designs set within generously landscaped plots is a defining feature of the character and appearance of Drayton Park. Houses are generally set within spacious plots, however given the characteristic mature landscaping within generous front drives and gardens, the extent to which this is perceived from Drayton Park ('the road') varies. The appeal site is partially screened from surrounding pavements and the road by mature landscaping, combined with screening from the tree lined grass verge that separates the pavement from the road edge. Front and rear gardens are typically separated by fencing or garden walls such that views into rear gardens from the road are limited.
4. Local residents have collaborated on the Drayton Park Design Statement (ultimately adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document in December 2020, the 'SPD'). Understandably the SPD seeks to ensure that proposals preserve the area's distinctiveness, with mature boundary planting being a defining feature. The SPD also sets out how the spacing between neighbouring buildings is important to maintaining character, privacy and screening. Paragraph 5.2.4 guides that 'the 5m [separation] distance from boundaries should be maintained wherever possible', reflecting the original layout here.

5. In this instance, whilst the proposal breaches the 5m distance, reducing the gap to a minimum of 2.1m to the eastern boundary fence, this would not alter key features of the landscaping on site, namely planting along the front of the plot and on the boundary with the neighbouring front garden. This would retain the pleasant leafy frontage to this house which partially screens the building. A tree survey was not submitted with the application. However it is clear from the location of the proposed extension that it would not require the removal of any trees or landscaping that make a meaningful contribution to the character of the area. Alterations to landscaping would therefore be kept to an absolute minimum in line with the SPD.
6. I also saw that the boundary immediately adjacent to the proposed extension is not heavily landscaped, comprising wooden fencing. Two very small evergreen trees are positioned against the fence that separates the front and rear garden here. Although additional landscaping is not proposed, the scheme would retain landscaping at the front of the plot and would be viewed against the backdrop of substantial mature vegetation to the rear of the house. A small area of lawn adjoining the house would be removed, however this provides minimal contribution to the overall character of the area.
7. Moreover, the extension would appear subservient to the main house, being single storey with a hipped roof raked back from the side boundary, and in keeping with roof styles on the existing house. A substantial degree of set back from the front boundary of the property would be maintained in line with the prevailing character of development there.
8. Whilst the distance between the proposed development and the side boundary would be reduced, as reasoned above, due to the set back from the road, established planting and the small scale of the proposed extension, it would not appear at odds with the attractively landscaped, open character of the area. Nor would it result in the plot appearing overly cramped.
9. For these reasons I conclude that the proposed side extension would not harm the character and appearance of Drayton Park. Consequently it would accord with Policy ENV10 of the Settlements and Countryside Local Plan (Part 2) for Daventry District 2011-2029 (February 2020) which promotes high quality design that amongst other matters, reinforces local distinctiveness (criterion i.), and responds to the wider landscape context (criterion vii.).
10. For similar reasons the proposal would accord with the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework'), and in particular paragraph 127 which sets out that development should be sympathetic to local character and maintain a strong sense of place.

Other Matters

11. I have taken careful account of the concerns raised by local residents, which principally relate to potential impacts in respect of noise or disturbance (in addition to consistency with the SPD). However the scheme is for a modest extension to an existing dwelling, unlikely to lead to any greater intensity of use. Given the absence of side facing windows, the spacious nature of development here, and temporary nature of construction, in my view the proposal would not result in unacceptable effects to those nearby.

Conditions

12. I have imposed a condition specifying compliance with the approved plans in the interests of certainty. To ensure that the proposal integrates appropriately with the character and appearance of the area, as assessed above, I have additionally imposed conditions regarding external materials and foundation design so as to avoid adverse effects to nearby trees. In imposing conditions I have had regard to the tests in the Framework, and have accordingly modified certain conditions compared to those advanced by the Council without altering their fundamental aims.

Conclusion

13. For the above reasons, having considered the development plan as a whole, the approach in the Framework and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed subject to the conditions below.

Rachel Hall

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 001 Rev A, 003 Rev A, and 004 Rev A.
- 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building.
- 4) No development hereby permitted shall be undertaken until details of the foundation design, and an associated construction methodology, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.