
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 October 2021

by David Troy BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 November 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/F2415/D/21/3276800

19 North Way, Houghton-On-The-Hill LE7 9HR

- 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 Mrs Ketki Rana against the decision of Harborough District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00247/FUL, dated 1 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 29 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is garage conversion and addition of first floor over to include dormer window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council's and appellant's submissions state that, following the submission of a revised drawing no. 3540-02 Rev H as part of the planning application process, the dormer window no longer forms part of the proposed development. The Council's and appellant's submissions confirms that the proposed development was determined by the Council on this basis and as such I have considered the appeal on this basis accordingly.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two storey detached dwelling with a single storey attached garage to the front located in a mature well-established residential area. North Way is characterised by detached properties of varied styles and design set back from the road behind front gardens/driveways. Where garages and other extensions exist in front of the residential properties, these are low, clearly subsidiary, and have little impact upon the sense of space and openness in the area.
5. The appeal proposal would entail the conversion of the garage to habitable accommodation and construction of first floor extension over the garage. The proposed extension would project out from the front of the property and would be stepped down below the ridge of the host property with a gabled tiled roof.

6. The appeal property is on a relatively spacious plot and as such the extension would not appear overlarge, relative to the overall plot size. The scale and form of the proposed first floor extension built in the front of the main house would nevertheless still be a significant addition relative to the main property. As such, although set in from the front boundary of the site and stepped down at roof level, the proposed first floor extension would result in substantial bulk at the front of the main dwelling that would be out of character with the more modest form and appearance of the host building and would compromise the sense of space and openness in the area.
7. These shortcomings would be exacerbated by the proposal's prominent position, where the proposed first floor extension would be visible from a number of public vantage points along North Way. The proposed first floor front extension, by virtue of its scale, siting and design, would fail to achieve an appropriate degree of subordination to the host property and would detract from its architectural integrity. As such, I consider that the proposed first floor extension would result in an incongruous and out-of-keeping addition that would cause unacceptable harm to the host property and the area.
8. I have considered the appellant's arguments that the design and layout of the extension have been carefully considered and redesigned in order to take into account the character of the host property and to minimise any impacts on the area. However, whilst the use of matching materials and fenestrations would assist in integrating the proposal with the host property and the area, these aspects do not overcome the adverse effects outlined above.
9. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed first floor front extension would adversely harm the character and appearance of the host property and the area. It is contrary to the overall aims of Policy GD8 of the Harborough Local Plan 2019 and Policy D2 of the Houghton on the Hill Neighbourhood Plan 2017. These policies, amongst other things, seek to ensure that development proposals are of a high standard of design that respect, sustain and enhance the local character and characteristics of the individual site, street scene and environment to ensure it is integrated into the existing built form.

Other Matters

10. I have noted the other developments in the area drawn to my attention by the appellant. However, the various front extensions and alterations on the properties within the surrounding area have different development characteristics to the appeal scheme. In any event, each proposal falls to be assessed primarily on its own merits and I am unaware of the full circumstances associated with these other cases.
11. The appellant considers the proposal would constitute a sustainable form of development in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021. I have considered the various benefits put forward by the appellant that the proposal would bring, including providing additional accommodation to meet the family's needs, the effective use of land, contributing to the local economy through additional building work and increased Council tax receipts. While I have given them some weight, these modest benefits would not be sufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified. For all these reasons, there are no other material considerations to outweigh the development plan conflicts identified.

Conclusion

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

David Troy

INSPECTOR