



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 November 2021

by Andrew Owen MA BA(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/V2825/D/21/3280304

57 Thorburn Road, Northampton NN3 3DA

- 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 Nadiya Allom against the decision of West Northamptonshire Council.
 - The application Ref WNN/2021/0065, dated 15 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 10 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is to convert existing garage to a bedroom and build first floor extension above garage for a bedroom, alterations to porch area.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The area is strongly characterised by large attractive detached dwellings set back from the highway and in spacious plots. There is no overriding design consistency across the houses, and two-storey front facing gables can be seen at a number of other houses along Thorburn Road. However, few have two such gables.
4. The existing house already has a front facing gable which is its most prominent feature. The proposed extension would project forward of the existing garage to create a second gable. This second gable would be around 7.5 metres wide and would be considerably wider than the existing gable. This would result in the resultant dwelling having an unbalanced front elevation. Although the height, materials and roof pitch would match the existing dwelling, the excessive width of the proposal, particularly when seen with the existing gable, would mean that the development would dominate the host dwelling.
5. There are a number of large trees along the front boundary and along the north boundary forward of the house, which would provide some screening. However, the extension would still be visible in the street scene when approaching the site from the south and through the vehicular access to the site. Despite the variety in the design of the surrounding houses, the unbalanced appearance of the house would represent poor design and so, in the context of its attractive neighbours, it would appear incongruous in the street scene. It would hence detract harmfully from the character and appearance of the area.

6. The appellant refers to a number of specific examples of similar developments on Thorburn Road. Whilst they all comprise large two storey extensions, and some include front facing gables, they all appear to have generally respected the scale and design of their pre-existing houses and do not dominate the appearance of the dwellings. As a result, the proposal does not compare favourably with them.
7. It is recognised that the property, as a whole, would not be excessively large compared to its neighbours and would still sit comfortably on its plot. Nonetheless, it is the scale, particularly the width, of the extension itself that causes the harm.
8. It therefore would fail to accord with policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan, which seeks to ensure extensions reflect the character of their surroundings including in terms of their form and scale, and policy S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy which requires development to protect and conserve the built environment. It would also conflict with the advice in the Northampton Residential Extensions and Alterations Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, which aims to ensure that extensions preserve and complement the character of the individual house and the area.

Conclusion

9. The proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations that outweigh this. Therefore, for the reasons given, the appeal is dismissed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR