
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 January 2022

by D J Barnes MBA BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 24 FEBRUARY 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/W2845/D/21/3284872

Random Stones, Little Horton House Drive, Horton NN7 2BB

- 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 S Kooner against the decision of West Northamptonshire Council.
 - The application Ref WNS/2021/0977/FUL, dated 5 July 2021, was refused by notice dated 17 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a garage extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. It is considered that the main issues are the effects of the proposed development on (a) the character and appearance of the surrounding area and (b) the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal scheme includes an increase in the height of an existing detached garage which is sited within the front garden of a large dwelling. The garage is sited adjacent to the shared boundary with other residential properties. The ridge height of the outbuilding would increase from about 3.5 to 6 metres.
4. Policy SDP1 of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan (LP) is principally concerned with residential extensions to dwellings rather than outbuildings. However, the principles of maintaining or enhancing the character and appearance of the building, streetscene and surroundings are applicable to the appeal scheme. The *South Northamptonshire Design Guide* does not specifically address extensions to garages but, instead, refers to the minimum size parameters, types of doors and roof design.
5. By reason of the extensive boundary vegetation along the front boundary with the Little Horton House Drive and other built forms of development, there are limited public views of the existing garage from the surrounding area. It is acknowledged that the vegetation could be removed at a later date and the proposed increase in the height of the garage would increase its scale and bulk. However, the resulting 1½ storey outbuilding would not result in a garage of excessive scale or size which would be an incongruous form of development

within the extensive curtilage of the host dwelling. Instead, the enlarged garage would integrate into the surrounding area and it would also be compatible in scale to the host dwelling and its extensive front garden, including when viewed from Little Horton House Drive and Brafield Road.

6. On this issue it is concluded that the proposed development would not cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and, as such, it would not conflict with LP Policies SS2 and SPD1. Amongst other matters, these policies refer to development being compatible, and integrate, with the surroundings and the distinctive local character of the area.

Living Conditions

7. In the outlook from some of the windows and gardens of neighbouring dwellings the visual prominence of the existing garage varies, but where it is visible it has the appearance of a typical single storey outbuilding with a pitched roof. However, with the increase in height proposed the massing and character of the outbuilding would significantly change.
8. In combination with its siting adjacent to the shared boundary, the resulting garage would be a visually prominent and overbearing form of development for the occupiers of the neighbouring properties, in particular for the occupiers of Willand. The increase in the garage's height and its visual prominence would be accentuated for the occupiers of 48 Brafield Road because of the difference in the ground levels between the appeal site and this neighbouring property.
9. On this issue it is concluded that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties and, as such, it would conflict with LP Policy SS2 which, amongst other matters, refers to development not unacceptably harming the amenity of the occupiers and users of neighbouring properties.

Conclusion

10. Although the proposed development would not cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area this matter is significantly and demonstrably outweighed by the unacceptable harm which would be caused to the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties. Accordingly, it is concluded that this appeal should be dismissed.

D J Barnes

INSPECTOR