



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 April 2023

by Benjamin Clarke BA (Hons.) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/M2840/D/22/3306328

Craigmarr, Main Street, Barnwell, Northamptonshire PE8 5PU

- 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 Phil Holden against the decision of North Northamptonshire Council.
 - The application Ref NE/22/00665/FUL, dated 17 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 19 July 2022.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of an existing conservatory and erection of a ground floor rear extension, to be similar footprint; loft conversion with proposed front and rear dormers with a complete external redesign/overhaul.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed; and planning permission is granted for the demolition of an existing conservatory and erection of a ground floor rear extension, to be similar footprint; Loft conversion with proposed front and rear dormers with a complete external redesign / overhaul. at Craigmarr, Main Street, Barnwell, Northamptonshire PE8 5PU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: NE/22/00665/FUL, dated 24 May 2022, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 200862-SL-001; 200862-P-001; 200862-P-002; 200862-P-003; and 200862-P-004.

Main Issues

2. The main issues relevant to this appeal are:
 - the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area; and
 - the effect of the development upon the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties of Seaton Grove and Lark Rise, with particular reference to outlook and privacy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site consists of an existing detached bungalow located in the settlement. The surrounding area contains several dwellings constructed to differing designs and proportions. This varied character also means that

buildings are constructed from a variety of materials and that some include dormer windows or windows in the roof slope. This gives the appeal site and the surrounding area, a more developed and varied character.

4. The proposed development would result in the replacement of the existing conservatory with an extension. Although this would result in an enlarged dwelling of greater proportions, it would be seen in the context of varying proportions of buildings. In addition, this element of the development would be relatively well-screened. It would not, therefore, be a prominent addition to the vicinity.
5. The proposed development would feature the installation of dormer windows. Although I acknowledge that dormer windows are not a common feature in the surrounding area, I note that the surrounding buildings are constructed to varying designs. This means that several of the neighbouring dwellings have larger proportions than the appellant's dwelling and have varying architectural features.
6. In addition, the appeal site already features some relatively small box dormers to the front of the building. Therefore, within this varied context, the proposed development would not appear unduly incongruous for it would be viewed alongside a variety of buildings of differing types.
7. Furthermore, owing to the pattern of development in the surrounding area, views of the dormer windows from public areas would be relatively limited. This means that this part of the proposed development would not be a prominent addition to the locality.
8. The proposal would result in the insertion of differing building materials, when compared to the treatment to the elevations of the existing dwelling. Although these are not present within the immediate vicinity of the appeal site, on my site visit, I noted that there were several different material palettes used on neighbouring properties.
9. This varied character includes stone and bricks of differing colours. This creates a varied character. In addition, within the wider area, I also noted some limited amounts of render and cladding. This means that there is no predominant materials palette. In addition, the appeal site is relatively well-screened by the presence of other buildings in the surrounding area. The proposal would not be a prominent addition to the locality.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not have an adverse effect upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The development, in this regard, would comply with the requirements of Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2016) (the Core Strategy); and the Householder Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (2020). Amongst other matters, these seek to ensure that developments respond to the site's immediate and wider context and local character.

Living conditions

11. The appellant's dwelling consists of a detached dwelling of a single storey. Near to the appeal site are detached dwellings (known as Seaton Grove and Lark Rise).

12. The proposed development would include the replacement of a conservatory with an extension. Although this would be larger than the conservatory, the degree of increase would not be readily large. In addition, the proposed development would be screened by the site's boundary treatments. Therefore, this element of the proposal would not result in harm to the occupiers of neighbouring property in terms of light and outlook.
13. In addition, the proposed development would feature dormer windows. Although this would result in an increase in the overall level of fenestration, the overall effect on privacy levels would be limited given that any such views would be generally made at an oblique angle. This means that this element of the proposal would not be harmful, even though some of the windows would be relatively large.
14. The neighbouring property of Seaton Grove is located further back from the appellant's dwelling. Therefore, views from this property would be somewhat limited owing to the presence of a large outbuilding within the curtilage of the neighbouring dwelling. There are also limited windows on the side elevation of Seaton Grove that would face the appeal site. In result, the development would not have an enclosing effect on this property. Views from the remainder of the property would be against a backdrop of the existing dwelling. The proposed rear dormer windows would be located within the proportions of the building as currently constructed.
15. The rear elevation of the appellant's dwelling is broadly in line with the rear elevation of Lark Rise. In addition, Lark Rise does not feature any side elevation windows that face the appeal site. Therefore, the proposed development would not lead to any erosion of the outlook of the neighbouring property or have an enclosing effect.
16. Furthermore, the proposed dormer windows would be contained within the roof slope of the dwelling. This means that, when viewed from the neighbouring property of Lark Rise, it would be against a backdrop of existing development for it would not result in an encroachment of development closer to the neighbouring property. This would occur irrespective of the differences in land levels between the two properties.
17. In addition, the evidence before me indicates that a similarly proportioned dormer window could be installed at the property under Permitted Development rights. This means that planning permission would not be required. I have no reason to believe that, if this appeal is dismissed, the appellant will not explore this route to extend their home. In consequence, I must give it significant weight in my assessments.
18. Therefore, due to the limited differences between the 'fall-back' position of a scheme that would not require planning permission and the scheme that is the subject of this appeal, I do not believe that the proposed development would result in any notably greater loss of outlook. Therefore, I do not believe that the appeal scheme would result in harm.
19. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not result in an erosion of the living conditions of the neighbouring property. The development, in this regard, would comply with the requirements of Policy 8 of the Core Strategy; and Policy B2 of the Barnwell Neighbourhood Plan. Amongst other

matters, these seek to ensure that developments must respect residential amenity.

Conditions

20. In addition to the standard implementation condition, a condition is necessary in order to specify the approved plans. This is to confirm the extent of the planning permission. The Council has requested a condition that would require the proposed development to be constructed from materials that complement the original dwelling.
21. However, the terms of the planning application are clear that the development would not be constructed from materials that match the dwelling. Given this, and my findings in respect of the first main issue, such a condition would be unreasonable. Furthermore, given that the submitted plans outline the type of materials that would be used, I do not believe that a further condition covering materials would be necessary.

Conclusion

22. For the preceding reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed, and planning permission granted.

Benjamin Clarke

INSPECTOR