

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 May 2023

by R C Shrimplin MA(Cantab) DipArch RIBA FRTPI FCI Arb MCIL

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13th June 2023

Appeal Reference: APP/M2840/D/23/3317920

Land at 9 East Avenue, Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire NN15 5PF

- 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. Mason against the decision of North Northamptonshire Council.
 - The application (reference NK/2022/0680, dated 19 October 2022) was refused by notice dated 15 December 2022x.
 - The development proposed is described in the application form as a "Two Storey Side Extension and Single Storey Rear Extension".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue to be determined in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and its surroundings.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within a residential estate, in the northern part of Burton Latimer. East Avenue is part of a comprehensive residential layout that includes West, South and North Avenues, in a looped street pattern that forms a one-way traffic system through the estate. The houses are set back from the roadway, which allows for some off-street parking although the road itself is rather narrow.
4. The houses follow a consistent estate layout, typically as semi-detached pairs or terraces. They are designed in a traditional style, generally two-storey buildings with gabled or hipped roofs in rather elaborate and interesting forms that contribute variety and intricacy to the townscape. Some of the buildings have been modified over the years, not always in an attractive way, but the streetscene as a whole is pleasant and harmonious.
5. Number 9 East Avenue is one of a pair of semi-detached houses (with number 11). It is finished with textured, rendered walls, painted white, under a complex roof, dominated by hipped forms. The front garden is laid out to

- provide parking spaces but the house has a good size back garden. Number 9 also has a wide side garden area, due to the gap between the appeal site and the neighbouring house to the south, at number 7.
6. It is now proposed that a large, two-storey side extension should be added to the side of the existing house, with a single-storey "garden room" at the rear of the existing kitchen (replacing an existing lobby and store).
 7. The 'National Planning Policy Framework' emphasises the aim of "achieving well designed places" in the broadest sense (notably at Section 12), while making effective use of land and encouraging economic activity. It is aimed at achieving good design standards generally, by adding to the overall quality of the area and being visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history (while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change).
 8. Policies in the Development Plan share these basic principles. In particular, Policy 8 of the 'North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031' (which was adopted in July 2016) is intended to encourage good design. Among other things, it is aimed at creating a distinctive local character by relating new development to the existing context and drawing on the best elements of existing local character.
 9. In this case, the proposed side extension would repeat some aspects of the original architectural design concept, for example by incorporating a main hipped roof with rendered walls to match the existing building. The proposed scale of the extension need not be unobjectionable in itself and an appropriate use of materials is indicated.
 10. It is true that the open space at the side of number 9 would be largely taken up by the proposed side extension but that would not be unacceptable in principle, in this closely built up locality. In principle, I am convinced that a substantial extension could be acceptable in design terms and that it need not be subservient to the host building as such, provided that the design concepts and variety of the estate development were recognised. Strict symmetry of appearance need not be essential in my opinion.
 11. Nevertheless, the proposed front elevation would be clumsy and awkward in appearance. Two large garage doors would dominate, while the window pattern would be uncomfortable in the context of the traditional, 'Arts & Crafts' style, design. The roof form would be poorly related to the existing roofs, especially as the front elevation would be in a single plane, ignoring the architectural complexity of the original concept and unsympathetic to the overall appearance of the building.
 12. The same concerns do not arise in respect of the proposed rear elevation, but the impact on the streetscene would be critical in my view. Hence, I am convinced that the scheme would cause real harm to the character and appearance of the host building and its surroundings and that, therefore, it would conflict with both the 'National Planning Policy Framework' and the Development Plan.
 13. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area, which is "sustainable" in planning terms, and the proposed development would make a

useful addition to the existing house. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the objections that I have identified outweigh the benefits of the project and that it ought not to be allowed.

14. Although I have considered all the matters that have been raised in the representations, I have found nothing to cause me to alter my decision.

Roger C. Shrimplin

INSPECTOR