

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 March 2024

by K Allen MEng (Hons) MArch PGCert ARB

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 March 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/M2840/W/23/3326288

21 Herford Close, Corby, Northamptonshire NN18 9EQ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Andrew Lockley against the decision of North Northamptonshire Council.
 - The application Ref is NC/23/00174/DPA.
 - The development proposed is the conversion and extension to existing garage to form a self-contained flat (C3 use).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposal would provide adequate living conditions for the future residents, with particular regard to internal space; and
 - the effect of the proposal on highway safety.

Reasons

Living Conditions

3. The proposal would extend and convert an existing garage to a self-contained one-bedroom flat. The parties agree that the proposal meets the minimum gross internal floor areas required by the Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards, published by the Department for Communities and Local Government.
4. However, there appears to be discrepancies within the drawings. The dimensions noted do not correspond to the scaled dimensions. As such I am not convinced that the proposal would meet the floor area required for a 1 bed, 1 person flat nor provide enough space for a couple. Notwithstanding the outdoor amenity areas, the interior of the flat would be cramped and would provide a poor standard of living accommodation.
5. Therefore, I conclude that the proposal would not provide adequate living conditions for future residents, with particular regard to internal space. It would conflict with Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031 (July 2016) (JCS) where it seeks to ensure quality of life and healthier communities by protecting amenity and incorporating flexible design. Similarly, there would be conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) where it requires development to create places that promote

health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Highway safety

6. The appeal site is located on a dense suburban cul-de-sac. This portion of Herford Close has a narrow carriageway with numerous driveways extending towards garages set back from the road. Nos 20 and 21 share a driveway, bound to the north by a hedge and public footpath.
7. A drawing has been submitted which indicates that three parking spaces would be provided in a tandem arrangement with two retained for the use of the existing house and one for the new self-contained unit. Given the constricted nature of the driveway and existing shared usage with No 21, I am not convinced that the arrangement indicated would be possible without impeding the residents of No 20's use of the driveway.
8. Further, even if it was possible, it would not function sufficiently. The tandem arrangement would not allow the two properties to operate independently of one another. Therefore, satisfactory parking provision would not be provided, resulting in an increased demand for on street parking. Given the narrow carriageways and limited opportunities for on street parking within the wider estate, this increase in demand would prejudice highway safety by reducing visibility and increasing potential conflicts between road users and pedestrians.
9. Consequently, I conclude that the proposal would be detrimental to highway safety. It would conflict with Policy 8 of JCS where it requires development to make safe and pleasant streets by resisting developments that would prejudice highway safety and ensure satisfactory provision for parking. The proposal would also conflict with the Framework which seeks to prevent development which would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

Other Matters

10. The proposal would provide a self-contained unit of accommodation in an accessible location. It would contribute to the variety of properties within the area and make an efficient use of land. Whilst the Framework seeks to boost the supply of housing, I have no substantiated evidence before me to indicate that there is a specified need for accommodation of this type. Moreover, despite the proposal small scale, there is no mechanism before me which would secure the property as low-cost housing.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations, including the Framework that would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

K Allen

INSPECTOR