The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 June 2024

by A Hartley, LLB(Hons), Solicitor, MBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/A2525/D/24/3341973
56 Mill Lane, Whaplode, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE12 6TS

- 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 S Stafford against the decision of South Holland District Council.
- The application Ref is H23/0027/24.
- The development proposed is described as 'two storey extension and internal alterations'.

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 surrounding area.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal property is one of a group of semi-detached properties that show a high degree of consistency in design, style and size. There is a clear rhythm of space at first floor level between the pairs of dwellings that is not disrupted by their differing distance from the highway. Although there are properties within the area of different design, the uniformity of design in the vicinity of the appeal site is a defining feature of the character and appearance of the area and contributes positively to the street scene.

4. The appeal proposal would introduce a two-storey gable extension to the front and a two storey side extension. The gable extension would introduce an entirely new, prominent design feature that does not form part of the consistent design apparent here. In addition, the two storey side extension would noticeably reduce the gap that is characteristic at first floor level.

5. Housing design on the opposite side of the road is more varied. However, this does not diminish the harm arising from this proposal, due to the high degree of consistency of design amongst the semi-detached houses on this side of the road. Therefore, by reason of its scale, size and design, the proposal would appear incongruous in the street-scene and disrupt the uniformity that is a positive defining feature of the area.

6. Consequently, the proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Accordingly, it would conflict with Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) (SELLP) which require development to respect local character with regard to its size, design and layout. The proposal would also be at odds with paragraphs 131, 135 and 139 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). These seek development that is of good design, sympathetic to the local character, and for development that is not well designed to be refused.

Other Matters

7. Although the proposal would provide additional living accommodation for the occupants, I am not persuaded that the appeal proposal is the only way in which such improvements can be achieved. In any event, the desire to increase living space should not be at the expense of good design. Whether or not the Council would accept an alternative proposal for a single storey front extension, I have determined the appeal on the basis of the proposal before me.

8. A decision notice for a front extension at an address in Holbeach, Spalding (REF H09-0071-24), has been provided with the appeal. However, without further details of the site specific circumstances of that scheme, I cannot make a meaningful comparison.

Conclusion

9. Having taken into account all representations made, 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 indicate otherwise. The appeal should be dismissed.

A Hartley

INSPECTOR