
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 September 2016

by Rachel Walmsley BSc MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 5th October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/C1625/W/16/3151818

20 Castle Mead, Kings Stanley, Gloucestershire GL10 3LD

- 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 Martin Grindrod against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref S.15/2327/FUL, dated 28 September 2015, was refused by notice dated 9 March 2016.
 - The development proposed is the development of the land including 20 Castle Mead and adjacent plot of land. The proposal is to demolish existing bungalow, except garage, to replace it with 3 dwellings. An existing sub-station is retained and access to it provided.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. This is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is part of a residential estate, Castle Mead, which culminates in a cul-de-sac. The land leading to the cul-de-sac slopes upwards and the dwellings include one and two storey houses which are gently stepped in height but around the cul-de-sac are mostly single storey which gives the area an open and spacious character.
 4. To the rear of and some distance from the appeal site there are a variety of buildings of different forms and scales, including two storey properties. These buildings front different streets and therefore are not appreciated within the same context as the appeal site. It is within the context of Castle Mead and the properties either side of the appeal site that the proposed development would be appreciated.
 5. Whilst the ridge height would be lower than the average ridge height of a two storey house, the development would extend a distance above the height of the bungalows either side of the appeal site. Consequently the proposal would appear incongruous and overly dominant within the street and contrary to the general profile of development that decreases in height the further the development is into the cul-de-sac.
 6. I recognise that the footprint of the development would be less than that of the existing house on the site. However, when combined with the height of the
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development, the scale of the proposal would be inconsistent with the scale of the properties within the immediate vicinity of the appeal site.

7. The hardstanding proposed to the front of the site would contrast with the more generously landscaped frontages of existing houses within the street. Furthermore parking spaces to the side of the plot would be out of keeping with the frontage parking evident within the area and therefore harmful to the character and appearance of the area overall.
8. I appreciate that the current proposal has been designed to overcome previous concerns raised¹, to include a reduction in the height of the development and that careful attention has been given to matters such as materials and detailing and the position of the development in relation to the boundaries of the site and the landscaping. I also note that no objections have been raised to the amount of amenity space provided. Whilst these aspects of the development are welcomed, they do not overcome the harm that I have found to the character and appearance of the area as a result of the scale and layout of the proposal.
9. In all, therefore, the development would be unduly incongruous and out of keeping with the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Policy HC1 of the Local Plan² which requires development to be compatible with the character and appearance of the part of the settlement in which it would be located.

Other matters

10. I have been presented with an appeal³ relating to the refusal of a previous planning application on the site. The evidence before me suggests that the concerns raised at this time for the impact of the development on the privacy and outlook of the occupiers of No 18 Castle Mead and the amount of development on the site have been addressed, and this is welcomed. I also recognise that the development would contribute to the local need for housing within a defined settlement and would support the local economy. However, whilst these benefits are welcomed, they would not be sufficient to outweigh the harm found to the character and appearance of the area.
11. I have noted the moderate increase in density compared with the development which currently exists in Castle Mead. However, density was not raised as a concern by the Council and therefore this matter has little bearing on my overall consideration of this appeal.
12. The Council has a recently adopted Local Plan and having considered the proposal against it, I have found that the development would conflict with Policy HC1. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), it is where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date that the adverse impacts of a development should be considered against the benefits. Where the development would not accord with the development plan, paragraph 14 of the Framework recommends that the development should not be approved. I have found that the proposed development would be contrary to policy and therefore in accordance with the Framework, the development should not be granted consent.

¹ In association with planning application S.14/0724/FUL

² Stroud District Local Plan (adopted November 2015)

³ Ref: APP/C1625/W/15/3002496

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, the proposal would be contrary to policy and therefore the appeal is dismissed.

R Walmsley

Inspector