
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 October 2016

by Debbie Moore BSc (HONS) MCD MRTPI PGDip

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

Decision date: 24th October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3305/W/16/3153877

Land North of 9 Kennion Road, Wells BA5 2NP

- 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 D Newton against the decision of Mendip District Council.
 - The application Ref 2016/0803/FUL, dated 23 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as "Proposed New Dwelling (resubmission)".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises part of the garden of a semi-detached house. It is located on a prominent corner plot at the junction of Kennion Road and Somerville Road. The area is residential in character and semi-detached houses are the predominant form of development.
 4. The proposed development is a two storey house that would be attached to No 9 Kennion Road. The side gable of the house would reflect the building line set by the houses on Somerville Road.
 5. The need to respect the established building line has constrained the scale and design of the house. The house would have its own front door and would therefore have the appearance of a separate property. However, the front elevation would be significantly narrower than the existing semi-detached houses. The development would create a terraced group of three, but the end house would be relatively small, whereas terraced houses are generally of the same size and proportions. The smaller house at the end of the terrace, as proposed, would give the group an unbalanced appearance. Consequently, the development would be incongruous in the street scene due to its scale and proportions.
 6. The internal design would limit the fenestration on the front elevation and part of the first floor would be a blank wall. This would be detrimental to the design of the house and its appearance in the wider area.
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7. During my site visit, I looked at other extensions to houses in the vicinity and I appreciate that there is a variety of design. However, the extensions are all subordinate to the main dwelling and are consistent in this respect. The proposed development would not be subordinate but would be a house in its own right, which would stand out as an uncharacteristic feature. I also looked at the house which has been built next to No 7 Kennion Road. Although this differs in form because it is detached, the house is of an appropriate scale and proportions in relation to its context and is not comparable to the appeal proposal.
8. I appreciate that the house would be self-build, energy efficient and would be well located in relation to the city centre. It would also make a very small contribution to the District's housing supply. I have taken into account the letters of support and that the appellant has a requirement to live in the local area. However, these considerations do not outweigh the harm that would result from the proposal, as set out above.
9. The appellant states that other similar schemes have been approved in the area. The balance of considerations that informed those decisions is not before me. In any event, all decisions must be considered on their own merits taking account of site-specific circumstances.
10. I conclude that the development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore be contrary to Policy DP1 of Mendip District Local Plan: Part 1 Strategies and Policies 2006-2029 (2014) which seeks to ensure that development proposals have an appreciation of the built and natural context. It would also be contrary to Policy DP7 which, amongst other things, seeks to ensure new development is of a scale, mass, form and layout appropriate to the local context. The development would not meet the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework as it fails to improve the character and quality of the area.
11. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

Debbie Moore

Inspector