

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 September 2016

by David Walker MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 01 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/D0840/W/16/3155331

132 College Street, Cambourne, Cornwall TR14 7JZ

- 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 and Mrs G and J Barry against the decision of Cornwall Council.
 - The application Ref PA15/10800, dated 4 November 2015, was refused by notice dated 11 January 2016.
 - The development proposed is construction of dwelling and four parking spaces.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in the appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. College Street is an area of traditional terraced housing in long and narrow plots dating from the mid-1800s. Although there are examples of more modern developments in the vicinity of the appeal site, such as the three storey flats at Trevithick Court, neighbouring properties are in a terraced pattern. A narrow service lane provides access to the rear of College Street and features numerous outbuildings, mostly used for garaging.
 4. Although the rear access lane is developed along its length, this involves modest structures that do not extend far into their domestic plots. As a result these retain the character of being incidental to the dwellings they serve and appear ancillary in scale. While the proposal would also be a low overall height structure it would extend deep into the plot. A position between neighbouring garages would not sufficiently avoid it fundamentally altering the building to garden space ratio giving rise to visual intrusion in an undeveloped area.
 5. Moreover, the additional activity associated with the use of a dwelling, such as in daily comings and goings and in night-time activities and lighting, would be at odds with the low level of activity generally expected towards the end of a long garden. It would be out of character with the existing qualities of the area. Such harm as I find would give rise to conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and its policies at paragraph 17 to always
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- seek to secure high quality design and at section 7 for new development to respond to local character and integrate into the historic and built environment.
6. While the flats at Trevithick Court project backwards well beyond the frontage houses of College Street they are located at the end of the terrace where there is a natural break in the traditional pattern of development. In the circumstances I do not consider this development to conflict with the advice contained at paragraph ID: 26-007 of the Planning Practice Guidance for development to reinforce locally distinctive patterns of development in the manner in which the proposal would.
 7. I also acknowledge the additional accommodation provided at a nearby property and the support for the proposal offered by an interested party. However, in the absence of any details of that neighbouring development I am unable to draw any parallels between the cases. I also have some sympathy with the health issues of one of the appellants brought to my attention and the need for single storey accommodation. However, I have nothing before me to confirm the extent of these personal circumstances in order to afford them any significant weight.
 8. In reaching my findings I have had regard to the good location of the proposal for access to local facilities and services. Although the parties disagree over whether the Council can identify a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, the proposal would provide an additional unit towards the housing stock of the area. However, with regard to the principles set out at paragraphs 7-9 of the Framework, and the presumption in favour of sustainable development at paragraph 14, I find that a single additional dwelling would have a limited benefit from a social and economic standpoint that would be outweighed by the significant environmental harm I have identified.
 9. Therefore, while I am satisfied that the proposal would not harm the significance of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site with regard to paragraph 131 of the Framework and would provide a sufficient garden, access and parking spaces, overall I conclude that it would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. As a result it would conflict with the policies for achieving good design and local distinctiveness set out at paragraphs 17, 53, 58 and 61 of the Framework.
 10. In relation to other matters, I acknowledge the highway safety concerns raised by an interested party, but in the absence of any technical evidence of harm or objection from the local highway authority I do not find this to weigh heavily against the scheme.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Walker

INSPECTOR