
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 November 2016

by Richard Aston BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 21 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/J1535/W/16/3155042

77 Parklands, Coopersale, Epping, Essex CM16 7RG

- 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 J Frisby against the decision of Epping Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref EPF/0800/16, dated 23 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is a new dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposal provides adequate car parking provision and the effect on highway safety.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located to the side of No. 77 Parklands, a two storey end of terrace property in an estate of properties with a regular layout and uniform appearance. Because of the layout and design of the estate, there are no dedicated off-street parking spaces. Although there are single storey rows of garaging, the parking of vehicles predominantly takes place in marked bays laid out within an associated turning area, linear unmarked parking bays in front of some of the properties and on the street. From my observations, during the early part of the morning, it was clear that these areas were heavily parked with vehicles and I have no substantive evidence from the appellant to suggest that this is not the normal parking situation.
4. Policy ST6 of the Epping Forest District Local Plan Alterations 2006 ('LP') expects all development to provide on-site parking in accordance with the adopted 2001 standards or its successor documents and I have been provided with the Essex Works Parking Standards Design and Good Practice Guidance, 2009 ('the standards'). Although the appellant contends that the standards are designed as maximums, the standards make it clear that in recognition that providing a reduced number of spaces at a travel origin (which includes dwellings) does not discourage car ownership, the standards for such proposals should be applied as a minimum¹.

¹ Page 63 Essex Works Parking Standards Design and Good Practices Guide 2009.

5. The proposal would provide no parking and therefore there would be a shortfall of two parking spaces compared with the standards. Some flexibility is allowed in main urban areas that have frequent and extensive public transport with access to services and facilities and I note that the appeal site is close to the Coopersale shopping parade and there is a bus stop located on Coopersale Common that provides access to Harlow, Epping and North Weald. However, it seems to me that the location does not amount to a main urban area where a high level of accessibility may lead to a demonstrably lower level of average car ownership among occupants of the proposal to justify a dwelling with no off-street parking. Accordingly, I do not consider that it would be appropriate to apply such flexibility, in this particular case.
6. The proposal is for a three bedroom dwelling that would be suitable for a family and it is reasonable to expect that the occupiers of such a dwelling would have at least two cars. When combined with the likely number of associated visitors, the lack of parking would result in future occupants and visitors having no other option but to park within the already congested turning area and on the street. In this particular case, given the existing parking situation, granting permission for a dwelling without any off-street parking would cause inconvenience for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers of other vehicles using the shared spaces and increase the risks of conflict between users which would harm highway safety.
7. For these reasons, the proposed parking provision would not be adequate and would cause harm to the convenience and safety of users of the highway. The proposal would conflict with Policy ST6 of the LP and the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') insofar as the objective of providing on-site parking in accordance with local parking standards and seeking to create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians.

Conclusion

8. For the reasons set out above and having considered all other matters raised, the proposal would conflict with the development plan, when read as a whole and the Framework. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Richard Aston

INSPECTOR