
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 January 2017

by Nick Palmer BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

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

Decision date: 6 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/V2635/W/16/3162957
93 Elmside, Emneth, Wisbech PE14 8BQ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs C Sidgwick against the decision of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01585/O, dated 31 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 27 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is a site for construction of one dwelling.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. The application is for outline permission with all matters reserved. Indicative details of the siting and design of a dwelling have been provided. I shall consider those details as being indicative of a possible scheme.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The site forms part of the garden of the host property, a bungalow which fronts onto Elmside. The site is at the southern end of that road where it joins Hollycroft Road. It is within the development boundary for the village as defined in the development plan. The site is effectively separated from the rest of the garden by a land drain but it is proposed to pipe this and provide a level site.
 5. I saw on my visit that the immediate area is characterised by dwellings of individual designs along both Elmside and Hollycroft Road. Those dwellings occupy generally good sized gardens which provide a sense of spaciousness. I also saw that there is a sizeable area of open space between the two roads to the north of the site and that to the south there is open countryside on the western side of Hollycroft Road. The close proximity of open land in both directions adds to the generally open and spacious character of the area which is consistent with the location on the edge of the village.
 6. The proposal would introduce built development to the western frontage of this part of Hollycroft Road. The indicative plan does not form part of the proposal
-

but nonetheless demonstrates that in order to accommodate a dwelling this would be of a small size and would occupy a small garden. The piping of the drain would constrain the siting of the dwelling given the necessary easement so that the dwelling would need to be close to the Hollycroft Road frontage. For these reasons and given that a significant area would be required for car parking and turning space the proposal would have a cramped appearance. It would be out of character with the much more spacious surroundings. Furthermore this would be the only dwelling on this frontage and would be particularly prominent. By reducing the garden area to the host dwelling this would also have a more cramped appearance. For these reasons the proposal would be unacceptably harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

7. Development plan policies require that new development responds to the context and character of places and this requirement is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Policy CS08 of the Core Strategy¹ and policy DM15 of the Development Management Policies (DMP)² have this requirement specifically in relation to density, scale and layout and the local setting. For the reasons given the proposal would not accord with those policies.
8. While there may be other examples of development in the wider area of similar density to the proposal, the character of different areas varies. The appellant has referred to two recent permissions in the immediate area where the proportion of site coverage is said to be greater than the indicative proposal. However the individual circumstances of each site differ. For the reasons given the proposal would be particularly harmful because of its prominent location.
9. I have taken into account all other matters raised. While the Framework encourages the re-use of previously developed land the site does not fall within this category. The removal of the frontage hedge would provide improved visibility at the road junction but there is no evidence before me to indicate that this matter should be given any significant weight.
10. Policy DM1 of the DMP requires that development is sustainable, similarly to the Framework. The proposal would accord with the social and economic dimensions of sustainable development by providing a new unit of housing whose occupants may support the community and the local economy. The improvement to visibility at the junction would also accord with those dimensions. However these beneficial aspects would be limited while the harm to the character and appearance of the area would weigh significantly against the environmental dimension. For these reasons when considered in total the proposal would not be sustainable development and would not accord with policy DM1 of the DMP.

Conclusion

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

Nick Palmer

INSPECTOR

¹ King's Lynn & West Norfolk Core Strategy (2011)

² King's Lynn & West Norfolk Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (2016)