
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 February 2017

by I Radcliffe BSc(Hons) MRTPI MCIEH DMS

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

Decision date: 13 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/P3040/W/16/3161111

The Elms, Bradmore Road, Wysall, Nottingham NG12 5QR

- 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 Kevin Beard against the decision of Rushcliffe Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01463/FUL, dated 27 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 22 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is to demolish the existing dwelling and build a new dormer bungalow.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the countryside.

Reasons

3. The Elms is a modest bungalow facing Bradmore Road, located in the open countryside within an agricultural landscape of large hedged fields. With stable buildings and a ménage under construction to the rear, and the nearest other buildings 200m to 300m away, it is in an isolated location.
 4. The National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') is an important material consideration. A core planning principle of the Framework is that the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside should be recognised in both plan making and decision taking. Policy EN20 of the Rushcliffe Borough Non-Statutory Replacement Local Plan (NSRLP) seeks to protect the open countryside by, amongst other matters, requiring that replacement dwellings do not result in a disproportionate increase in the size or impact of the original dwelling. Whilst the NSRLP is not part of the development plan, its policies are used for development control purposes and policy EN20 is consistent with the approach of the Framework in seeking to protect the countryside. This policy is therefore a material consideration to which I attach significant weight.
 5. The original bungalow on the site was small in size and was extended to provide an additional bedroom, new kitchen, utility room and integral garage. The original part of the building has a hipped roof and the extension a flat roof. As a result, in public views from Bradmore Road and from the footpath to the south, it appears as a modest dwelling that is not particularly prominent within the landscape.
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6. The replacement dwelling would be 14.4m in breadth and 8.2m in depth. Although described as a dormer bungalow, at 5.25m to the eaves and 7.8m to the roof ridge it would be similar in height to many conventional two storey dwellings, and would appear as such, with half dormers, rather than full dormers, at roof level. The use of a gable ended roof would further increase the scale and mass of the proposed two storey dwelling in comparison to the bungalow it would replace. It is calculated by the Council that the dwelling would be 88% larger than the original dwelling. This has not been disputed by the appellant. In my assessment, this represents a disproportionate increase in size.
7. A detached two storey double garage with a gable ended roof is also proposed with a footprint of 8.5m by 6m and height to the ridge of the roof of 6.5m. Two large dormers, level with the ridge of the roof and extending down almost to eaves level, would increase the scale and bulk of the garage increasing its visual impact and giving it a top heavy appearance.
8. As a result, whilst views directly outside the bungalow are screened by a tall hedges and trees, in open views on the approach along Bradmore Road from the south and the north, the notable scale and mass of the proposed property would have a significantly greater urbanising effect on the countryside than the existing dwelling. In views from the footpath to the south, the proposed house would be seen in the context of the stables and ménage that are under currently construction to the rear of the dwelling. However, as the stables are single storey and are constructed from timber they appear as subservient rural outbuildings and so do not support the scale and visual impact of the proposed dwelling and garage.
9. The existing bungalow is not large, or ideally laid out, and the proposal would provide modern family accommodation. Secure garage storage is also required for equipment to maintain the land. However, these considerations are insufficient to outweigh the significant adverse urbanising effect that I have described the proposal would have on the character and appearance of the countryside.
10. The appeal scheme would be a smaller dwelling than that sought prior to pre-application discussions with the local planning authority. Since the appeal proposal was refused by the Council a revised scheme has been granted planning permission. In comparison to the appeal scheme, the approved replacement dwelling would be 1m shorter in breadth, 1/2m lower in height and the garage would not have any dormers. Taken together, these changes materially reduce the size and visual impact of the proposed development. There is a point at which, in terms of reducing size and altering design, a proposal for a replacement dwelling becomes acceptable. In this instance, I agree with the Council that the appeal proposal has not reached this point whilst the revised scheme has. As a result, reference to this permission has not altered my findings in relation to the appeal proposal.
11. Taking all these matters into account, I therefore conclude that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the countryside, contrary to policy EN20 of the NSRLP and a core planning principle of the Framework. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

Ian Radcliffe

Inspector