
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 March 2017

by Graeme Robbie BA(Hons) BPI MRTPI

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

Decision date: 13th April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/X4725/W/16/3166989
60 Redhill Avenue, Castleford WF10 4QN

- 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 Hodlin against the decision of City of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01998/FUL, dated 12 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 26 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is one detached dormer bungalow (re-submission of 15/01920/FUL).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. Redhill Avenue is a long, gently curving and, in places, steeply sloping residential street. Towards the appeal site however, the street levels off and the previously mixed style and scale of dwellings becomes more consistent with a group of detached and semi-detached bungalows clustered around the junction of Redhill Avenue, Fairfield Court and Redhill Heights.
 4. The bungalows here share a number of broad characteristics in terms of their overall proportions and scale, despite being a mix of detached and semi-detached properties. The relationship between the overall height and roof proportions of each dwelling to the width of the building; a relatively simple and pleasingly plain appearance and a sense of spaciousness arising from broadly consistent and regular spacing between and around the bungalows are all consistent themes in this area. Whilst the width of the gap between the sides of the existing bungalows at Nos. 60 and 70 is larger than most it does not appear excessively so in views along Redhill Avenue.
 5. There is evidence along Redhill Avenue that living accommodation is also provided within the generously proportioned roof spaces of these bungalows, as witnessed by the mix of roof-lights and first floor windows within the gable
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- and flank elevations. Dormer windows are, however, broadly absent as a design feature along this particular stretch of Redhill Avenue.
6. The proposed dwelling would be situated in the gap between the two existing bungalows at 60 and 70 Redhill Avenue, sited so as to retain gaps, albeit limited, between the flank walls and the site boundaries on each side. It would, the appellant states, follow the broad pattern of development along Redhill Avenue by reflecting the prevailing building line and ridge heights of the bungalows on either side of the appeal site, and by ensuring spacing between the adjoining buildings and the proposed bungalow.
 7. However, I disagree. The appeal site is barely half the width of the plots on either side of it. By setting in the proposed bungalow from the two sides of the relatively narrow plot, it would be at odds with the simple horizontal emphasis and low-line appearance of the surrounding bungalows. The limited width of the plot, and consequently also that of the proposed bungalow, together with the proposed ridge height, would give it an incongruously vertical emphasis and a somewhat jarring, top-heavy, appearance.
 8. Thus, I find that the proposed bungalow would appear awkwardly at odds with the bungalows either side, and with those in the immediate area in terms of its overall scale and proportions. It would result in a contrived, discordant and incongruous addition to the street scene that would fail to respect the character and appearance of the locality in terms of its design and scale, as required by policy CS10 of the Wakefield Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy (CS) and policy D9 of the Wakefield LDF Development Policies Document (DPD). Together, these policies recognise the importance of good design and seek to ensure that all new developments are of a high quality design that are appropriate to, and respect the character and appearance of the locality. The proposal would also be at odds with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which seeks high quality design as one of its core planning principles.
 9. I acknowledge that the proposal would provide an additional dwelling to the overall housing supply within the Borough, and that future occupants of the dwelling would no doubt contribute to the local economy. Whilst these factors weigh in favour of the proposal they are however limited, commensurate with the small scale of the proposal and are not sufficient to outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area that I have identified above.
 10. I have been referred to a development in Horbury where a dwelling has been sited so as to leave gaps of 1 metre to the side boundaries on each side of the building. However, I do not have the full details of the circumstances that led to these proposals being accepted and so cannot be certain that they represent a direct parallel to the appeal proposal, including in respect of scale, siting, the character and appearance of the surrounding area and development plan policy. In any case, I have considered the appeal proposal on its own merits and I give this matter limited weight.

Other Matters

11. I note that whilst the Council considered the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of occupiers of the two adjacent properties on Redhill Avenue, these concerns did not form part of the Council's reason for refusal. As I have found

harm in respect of the character and appearance of the surrounding area, I have not considered this matter further.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out, and having considered all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Graeme Robbie

INSPECTOR