The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 May 2017

by Graham Wyatt BA (Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 1st June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/W/17/3169242
19 Thornbera Road, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 3NJ

- 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 Mr Samuel Faulkner against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
- The application Ref 3/16/1748/OUT, dated 20 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 20 October 2016.
- The development proposed is demolish existing four bedroom bungalow and erect 4 No. new dwellings (2 No. bungalows and 2 No. houses) with associated parking and altered access.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The appeal is outline with all matters reserved for future consideration. An indicative site plan (drawing 3) and street scene (drawing 4) have been provided detailing how the site could be developed with 4 new dwellings. I have treated these as illustrative drawings for the purposes of the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is within an established urban area. Most properties have been extended or altered and the road contains a variety of designs with two storey dwellings the prevailing house type. Generally, most properties have parking areas to the front and long rear gardens. The bungalow at the appeal site is an anomaly in the area and is sited on a slight bend in the road with a vehicular access and parking areas to the side. The site benefits from a wider, and consequently, larger rear garden than the majority of other dwellings in the vicinity.

5. The proposed development would demolish the existing bungalow and replace it with a pair of semi-detached 2 storey dwellings to the front of the site. A further 2 detached bungalows and garaging would be erected to the rear of the site, resulting in a backland development. I note from the Officer's delegated report that the Council do not object in principle to the replacement of the

bungalow with a pair of semi-detached properties to the front of the site. It is the backland development to the rear of the site that they object to.

6. The number of dwellings proposed would be at odds with the area's established urban grain, in particular the long plots that characterise the area. The presence of dwellings to the rear of frontage dwellings would be detrimental to the generally undeveloped nature of rear gardens in the site's vicinity. Additionally, the number of dwellings in relation to the size of the site would appear cramped and incongruous when compared to the prevailing more spacious appearance of the area. These adverse effects would be easily seen by passers-by on Thornbera Road. The proposed development would result in material harm to the character and appearance of the area.

7. As such, the proposal would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policies ENV1 and HSG7 of the East Herts Local Plan (EHLP) Second Review (April 2007) which seek, among other things, to ensure that development proposals are of a high standard of design and layout that reflects local distinctiveness.

Other Matters

8. In the context that the Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites I recognise that the proposal would contribute to the overall provision of dwellings in the district and make more efficient use of land within a sustainable location. However, these positive effects from only three additional dwellings would be limited and in my view the adverse effects I have identified above would significantly and demonstrably outweigh such benefits when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) taken as a whole. As such, the proposal would not amount to sustainable development in the terms of the Framework.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Graham Wyatt

INSPECTOR