
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 May 2017

by Alexander Walker MPlan MRTPI

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

Decision date: 16th June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/U4610/W/17/3166729
41 Holmfield Road, Coventry CV2 4DD

- 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 B Singh against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref FUL/2016/2273, dated 12 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 13 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a bungalow.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the dwelling on the character and appearance of the area; the effect on the living conditions of the occupants of neighbouring residential properties, with regard to privacy; and, whether it would provide adequate living conditions for future occupants, with regard to privacy and outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is located within a predominantly residential area, generally characterised by two-storey terrace rows. Whilst the appeal site forms part of the garden area of No 41 Holmfield Road, the proposed dwelling would front onto Druid Road. Properties on Druid Road are set back from the highway and are generally set within modest plots with gardens/driveways to the front and gardens to the rear. Overall, the setback position of the dwellings, their modest size gardens and the wide street creates a sense of spaciousness. Furthermore, the uniform building lines and building designs make a positive contribution towards the character and appearance of the area.
4. The appeal site comprises a detached wooden garage with access directly off Druid Road, although there are no dropped kerbs providing vehicular access. This access also serves two other garages and the rear gardens of other properties on Holmfield Road. The site also comprises a portion of the rear garden of No 41 Holmfield Road.
5. The proposed dwelling would be orientated so that the front elevation would face the side elevation of No 79 Druid Road. Consequently, the side elevation would face the road. This would be in marked contrast to other properties on

the road which all have a clear frontage that embraces the street. The proposed dwelling's lack of frontage with the road would appear incongruous and fail to engage with the streetscene. This incongruity would be exacerbated by the dwellings position as it would sit significantly closer to the road than other properties and therefore appear prominent in the streetscene. I note that No 41 Holmfield does not follow the building line of other properties on Druid Road. However, No 41 is read in the context of Holmfield Road and not Druid Road. The siting of the dwelling in this location would represent a form of back-land development that would conflict with the well-established pattern of development in the area, failing to respect the relationship existing properties have with each other and their adjacent roads.

6. Moreover, the dormer bungalow design would fail to reflect the full two-storey design of the neighbouring properties. Whilst gable elements on the street are a prevailing feature in the locality, dormer windows are not. In addition, the roof of the dwelling would appear overly complex, with the dormer windows exceeding the height of the front gable element, in comparison to the simple, unbroken roof lines of the surrounding properties.
7. I find therefore that the dwelling would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Saved Policies BE2, H9 and H12 of the Coventry Development Plan (CDP) 2001, which seek to ensure that development reflects distinct patterns of development; provides an attractive residential environment; and, is of a high standard of design. Furthermore, it would fail to accord with the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). I note that the CDP pre-dates the Framework. However, these policies are consistent with the objectives of the Framework and as such I attribute them considerable weight.
8. I have had regard to the current use of the site and the existing garage's poor state of repair. However, for the reasons given above, the replacement of the existing garage with the considerably larger building would nevertheless significantly harm the character and appearance of the area.

Living conditions

9. The Council's Design Guide for New Residential Development (SPG) 1991 states that new dwellings should have a minimum of 20m separation distance between them. The rear garden of the proposed dwelling and the retained garden of No 41 would each be approximately 5m deep, with a total back to back separation distance of approximately 10m. As a consequence of this limited separation distance there would be intervisibility between the rear windows of the two dwellings, in particular the first floor windows. This would be to such an extent that it would have an unacceptable harmful effect on the usability of the habitable rooms that these windows serve. In addition, there would be significant overlooking of each of the rear garden areas and therefore there would be insufficient private outdoor amenity space to serve each of these dwellings. Whilst this effect would be harmful to No 43 Holmfield Road to a lesser extent than No 41, due to the limited separation distance it nevertheless adds weight to the overall harm to privacy.
10. Moreover, the limited amount of garden depth, which due to the 1.8m high timber fence boundary, would significantly reduce the outlook from the ground floor rear windows and garden area of No 41 and the proposed dwelling. In addition, the front elevation of the proposed dwelling would be in proximity of

the side elevation of No 79 Druid Road, which would dominate views out of the front windows in the property and therefore limit the outlook from them.

11. Overall, the proposal would result in an unacceptable harmful effect on the privacy of the occupants of No 41 Holmfield Road and would fail to provide adequate privacy for future occupants of the proposed dwelling. Furthermore, it would significantly harm the outlook from the rear windows and garden area of No 41 and would fail to provide an adequate outlook for future occupants of the proposed dwelling. As such, the proposal would fail to accord with Saved Policy H12 of the CDP, which seeks to ensure that development considers the relationship between buildings. Furthermore, it would fail to comply with the advice contained in the SPG and the design objectives of the Framework.
12. I note that the Council refer to Saved Policy H4 of the CDP. However, this policy relates to residential extensions. As the proposal is for a new dwelling, this policy is not relevant.

Other Matters

13. I have had regard to the effect of the development on highway safety in respect of on-street parking. However, based on the evidence before me and the observations I made on site, there is adequate on-street provision to accommodate the limited increase in parking as a result of the single bedroom dwelling. Therefore, I do not consider that it would severely harm highway safety.

Conclusion

14. The proposed dwelling would be located in a sustainable location with good access to services and facilities. Furthermore, it would be located within a well-established residential area. However, these matters, individually or cumulatively do not outweigh the harm I have identified above and as a consequence does not represent sustainable development.
15. For the reasons given above, having regard to all matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Alexander Walker

INSPECTOR