
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 May 2017

by Andrew Owen BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 16 June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/T2405/W/16/3162489
45 Leicester Road, Glen Parva LE2 9HJ

- 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 The executors of Harold J Hall against the decision of Blaby District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/0888/OUT, dated 16 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 10 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is erection of three bungalows on land at the front of the existing property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. The application was submitted in outline form with matters of access and layout to be considered. I have determined the appeal on this basis. Also, although scale is a reserved matter, I have given some consideration to the fact that the units are described as bungalows in the description of the development.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The site is on the east side of Leicester Road and accommodates the last house in a long row of large two-storey, and generally detached, dwellings. To the south is Woodbank which is a cul-de-sac of houses on smaller plots. The plots in Leicester Road are long and the houses are set back significantly from the road. The house at the site is set back from the road to a greater degree than its neighbours and this results in a very large front garden which is generously planted with mature trees. Indeed this part of Leicester Road is particularly verdant with many large mature trees in the front gardens of the dwellings dominating the street scene.
 5. The proposed bungalows would not be immediately visible from Leicester Road due to the density of the trees along the frontage. However some views may be possible through, and from within, the front gardens of the neighbouring
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- properties at Nos 47 and 49 as some of the vegetation on the north boundary of the appeal site would need to be removed to accommodate the bungalow at plot 1. The proximity of plot 1 to the boundary means there would be little opportunity for supplementary planting to screen this unit. Moreover from the access drive the development as a whole would be visible.
6. The long front gardens are a distinctive characteristic of the vicinity. Though the development would maintain a set back from the road, it would be considerably less than at present at the site and than that at the neighbouring houses. Therefore the development would result in the substantial loss of this characteristic.
 7. In addition, bungalows in small plots would be a form of development that fails to reflect the predominant character in Leicester Road of large houses in large plots. Therefore, although subordinate to the main house, the bungalows would not respect this local characteristic.
 8. At my site visit I saw the bungalow at the rear of 2 Woodbank which adjoins the appeal site. Though this dwelling is visible in the Leicester Road street scene, it is perceived as part of Woodbank being of similar materials and general appearance to the other houses in that road, and by being accessed from there. Most strikingly however is that the trees along the south boundary of the appeal site provide a strong visual barrier between this bungalow and the rest of the houses north along Leicester Road, whereas there is no such barrier to the other houses in Woodbank. Consequently this house contributes little to the setting of the appeal site.
 9. Similarly though I recognise planning permission has been granted, on appeal¹, for a detached double garage at 115 Leicester Road, this is some distance from the site and is not seen in the same context. Indeed in that decision, the Inspector commented that there are a number of garages built at the front of the neighbouring plots which set the context. In this case, there is no development comparable to the proposal in its setting.
 10. As such, whilst not prominent in the street scene, the development would nevertheless detract from, and therefore harm, the distinctive character and appearance of the area. Consequently the proposal would fail to accord with Policy CS2 of the Blaby District Local Plan (Core Strategy) Development Plan Document and saved Policy R1 of the Blaby District Local Plan both of which aim to ensure new development respects the local character and appearance of the area.
 11. I accept the development would make a small contribution to the Council's supply of housing, and in an urban area. However this does not outweigh the harm the proposal would cause as set out above.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, and taking account of all other considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR

¹ APP/W2465/D/15/3141505