
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 June 2017

by M Aqbal BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 3rd July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/J1860/W/17/3170498

9 Jacomb Road, Lower Broadheath WR2 6QW

- 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 Daniel Hughes against the decision of Malvern Hills District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/00694/FUL, dated 18 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 30 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is construction of a two storey 3 bedroom dwelling.
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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 area.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The majority of the appeal site is formed of the side garden to 9 Jacomb Road, which is broadly triangular in shape and located opposite Jacomb Close. The site is screened from the highway by a perimeter hedge and tree planting. The site is prominent in views when travelling along Jacomb Road and west along Jacomb Close. The general pattern of development comprises pairs of semi-detached dwellings arranged parallel to the highway.
4. Policy 21 of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP), amongst other requirements seeks new development to be of high design quality, which, reinforces local distinctiveness and integrates with its surroundings.
5. The appeal site is constrained by its irregular shape and the adjacent road layout. As such, the proposed dwelling would not be parallel to the highway and would also be significantly closer to the highway than nearby houses. This combination would create a cramped and incongruous effect that would be at odds with the settled character of the street scene. Furthermore, although designed to be in keeping with the local vernacular, the proposed single dwelling would have a footprint and mass similar to nearby pairs of semi-detached houses. This would appear discordant, thereby amplifying the

incongruous effect noted above. As a result of these factors the appeal scheme would neither integrate with its surroundings nor reinforce local distinctiveness.

6. The appellant asserts that the existing pattern of development is not uniform. Reference is made to an infill development of a pair of semi-detached dwellings along Jacomb Road. However, while these dwellings are not parallel to the road, they are no closer to the highway than the two dwellings on either side. The appellant has also referred to other dwellings along Jacomb Road which have relatively shorter separation distances from the highway. However, I observed on my visit that these sit parallel to the road. Bearing in mind that my concerns about the appeal scheme relate to the combined effect of its orientation and degree of separation from the highway, as well as its appearance as a single dwelling with a similar mass and footprint to nearby semi-detached properties, these factors do not overcome the harm described above.
7. I accept that existing landscaping would part screen the proposed dwelling. However, the retention of such landscaping would need to be balanced against other important priorities for example the need for daylight to windows, creation of parking areas to the front of the dwelling and requirement to maintain adequate visibility splays. Therefore, whilst landscaping would provide some mitigation it would not, in my opinion, ameliorate the adverse impact of the development.
8. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the proposed development would appear cramped and incongruous resulting in a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the area, contrary to the design aims of Policy 21 of the SWDP.

Other Matters

9. I accept that the net increase of a single dwelling would bring some, albeit limited, economic and social benefits including boosting housing supply and choice, increased local spend and the creation of construction jobs. However, considering the three dimensions of sustainable development together. The economic and social benefits would not outweigh the environmental harm I have identified on the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

10. For the above reasons the appeal should be dismissed

M Aqbal

INSPECTOR