
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 July 2017

by Andrew Dawe BSc(Hons) MSc MPhil MRTPI

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

Decision date: 01 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/U3935/W/17/3172244

79 Swindon Road, Stratton St Margaret, Swindon, SN3 4PU

- 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 M Griffin against the decision of Swindon Borough Council.
 - The application Ref S/16/2209/RM, dated 23 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 23 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council, in its decision notice, refers to the Swindon Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (the Design Guide). I have afforded some weight to that document due to its role in supporting the relevant development plan policy.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. No 79 is one of a pair of semi-detached dwellings at the northern end of a row of houses with a similar building line, albeit with some variation in design including a detached property at No 81. There is also a noticeably larger gap between Nos 79 and 81 than is the case with the others in that row. However, the building line in particular provides a pleasing degree of continuity within the row, together with the similarly coloured front elevations. That degree of continuity also stands out within a streetscene where there is otherwise a variety of other building types and designs, including with varying degrees of set back from the road.
5. The proposed dwelling would occupy most of the space to the side of the existing house and project noticeably forward of its front elevation. As such it would cause a distinct and jarring break in the building line of the row of houses referred to above. Attention would be drawn all the more to that situation, adding to the incongruity, by the close proximity to the properties either side.

6. I have had regard to other cases referred to by the appellant, relating to planning permission granted, either by the Council or on appeal, for single detached dwellings elsewhere along Swindon Road. However their circumstances in terms of the relationship with neighbouring properties are not the same as those concerning the current appeal proposal. I have in any case determined this appeal on its own merits.
7. For the above reasons, the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. As such it would be contrary to policy DE1 of the Swindon Local Plan and the Design Guide which together require development to have a high standard of design having regard to, amongst other things, context and character and siting.

Other matter

8. The appellant highlights that the Parish Council has not raised any objections. However, I have determined the appeal on its merits based on all of the evidence submitted and my observations.

Conclusion

9. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development and indicates that to achieve that, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.
10. The proposal would have the small benefit of adding a single dwelling to the local housing supply in a sustainable location. I also acknowledge that the forward position of the proposed dwelling in relation to No 79 would enable the size of the rear garden area to be maximised. However, these factors would not outweigh the unacceptable harm I have found it would cause to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would therefore not be a sustainable form of development.
11. Therefore, for the above reasons, the appeal should be dismissed.

Andrew Dawe

INSPECTOR