



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 July 2017

by Robert Fallon B.Sc. (Hons) PGDipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 8th August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3115/W/17/3172261
7 Hillary Way, Wheatley, Oxford OX33 1UY

- 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 P. O'Brien against the decision of South Oxfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref P16/S4061/FUL, dated 16 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 1 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is subdivision of existing garden to provide plot and erection of new detached 2 bedroom single storey dwelling. Provision of 2 no. off street parking spaces with new highway access to Roman Road. Secure cycle storage and bin enclosures.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. For clarity, I have used the description shown on the application form, which differs from that on the decision notice and appeal form which both refer to amended plans. However, because the scheme has been determined on the basis of revised drawings 16-008/P/101A (site location and block plan) and 16-008/P/102A (elevations), I have assessed the scheme on that basis also.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. Roman Road is characterised by single and 2-storey properties of varying architectural styles which front onto the vehicular highway. The appeal site forms part of what was previously the rear garden to no. 7 Hillary Way, an extended semi-detached bungalow. Along with the rear gardens of nos. 1, 3, 5 and 9 Hillary Way, the appeal site directly abuts Roman Road and this boundary is demarked by a mixture of tall fencing and hedging. This part of Roman Road therefore has an enclosed appearance, in direct contrast to the more open character on the opposite side of the road at nos. 9 to 17, which has dwellings facing the highway with spacious front gardens.
5. The proposed development would result in the appeal site being exposed to the highway, with the adjacent rear gardens of nos. 1, 3, 5 and 9 remaining screened from public view by taller boundary fences, trees and hedges. As a

consequence, the proposal would result in an incongruous gap to an otherwise fully enclosed part of Roman Road. This would be harmful to the visual cohesiveness of this part of the streetscene and be clearly visible when passing in both directions. The presence of parking and bin storage to the site frontage, with minimal space to both sides of the bungalow, would also give the impression that the development had been squeezed onto the site, not in keeping with the prevailing spacious character of the area.

6. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would adversely affect the character and appearance of the area and be contrary to Policy CSR1 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (adopted December 2012) and Policies H4 and D1 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (adopted January 2006), which seek to ensure a high standard of design and ensure that new development does not adversely affect the character of an area.
7. It is agreed by both parties that the Council does not have a 5 year housing land supply. In view of the benefit of providing an additional dwelling against this shortfall, I have also assessed the proposal against paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In particular, I have considered whether the adverse impacts of allowing the appeal would outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF as a whole.
8. The NPPF states that Councils should seek to boost the supply of housing where supply falls short by providing five years worth of housing (para 47) and that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 49). It also states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development (para 56) and that poorly designed development which fails to take the opportunity to improve the character and quality of an area should be refused (para 64). I acknowledge that the site is located in a sustainable location where the principle of development is acceptable, but for the reasons set out in para 5 above, I conclude that the harm to the character and appearance of the area would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal including its relatively small contribution to the housing supply.

Conclusion

9. I have found that the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area and that this would significantly outweigh the benefits of providing one additional dwelling when set against the shortfall in housing supply. In view of this and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Robert Fallon

INSPECTOR