
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 November 2017

by A A Phillips BA (Hons) DipTP MTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 30 November 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/D1835/W/17/3181507

Land at 2a Cornmeadow Green, Worcester, Worcestershire WR3 7PN

- 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 Sam Wagstaff against the decision of Worcester City Council.
 - The application Ref P17E0063, dated 6 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 16 May 2017
 - The development proposed is the construction of a new dwellings, including car parking area and garden on land at 2a Cornmeadow Green, Worcester WR3 7PN.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site is situated immediately adjacent to a pair of semi-detached residential properties close to the junction of Cornmeadow Lane and Cornmeadow Green. The area is predominantly suburban in character although Cornmeadow Green has a relatively dense pattern of development which has a far more rural character with a wide range of properties of different sizes, designs and ages.
4. Owing to the topography of the site and its surroundings and the curvature of the adjacent road it is in a very prominent position adjacent to a junction. It is particularly visible when approaching from the south and is part of an attractive garden area which forms a visually important open space situated between the flank wall of No 2a and Cornmeadow Lane and the highway and makes a positive contribution to the quality of the surrounding residential area.
5. Although the site is partly screened by a well-established mature hedge adjacent to the highway, the proposal would encroach into a space adjacent to an existing house and would constitute a visually prominent and intrusive form of development, failing to integrate successfully into the suburban pattern of development, locally. It would form an incongruous feature in the street scene and as a consequence of the topography of the site and its surrounding would dominate the area. It would not fit comfortably into the site and would compromise the important contribution the relatively open garden makes towards its attractive suburban residential surroundings.

6. One of the Council's main concerns relates to the effect of the proposal on established building lines. However, I do not consider building lines in the area to be particularly strong, well-established or evident. There is a relatively well-established building line along the Eastern side of Cornmeadow Lane; however, along the western side there is a varied building line with properties having different separation distances to the adjacent highway. In addition Nos 2A and 2B Cornmeadow Green are situated forward of the main building line along that residential street formed by Nos 2 to 8. Therefore, I do not consider that the proposal would harmfully erode any well-established building lines.
7. The appellant contends that a number of design issues, such as keeping the height of the proposed dwelling as low as possible, and highways safety concerns have been addressed and therefore the only issue that remains contentious is the effect of the proposed dwelling on the surroundings, which he considers to be a subjective matter.
8. Nonetheless, as a consequence of the harm I have identified with respect to the visual prominence and incongruous nature of the proposal I conclude on this issue that there would be a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. As such it would conflict with Policy SWDP 21 of the South Worcestershire Development Plan Adopted February 2016, the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance Number 3 Residential Design Guide October 2002 and the National Planning Policy Framework. Among other objectives these seek to ensure that all development proposals achieve a high standard of design having regard to the character of the area and harmonising with their surroundings to contribute positively to the character and quality of the environment.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above and taking into account other matters raised I conclude that the proposal conflicts with the development plan taken as a whole and that the appeal should be dismissed.

Alastair Phillips

INSPECTOR