



## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 November 2017

**by Mike Worden BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

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

**Decision date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2017**

---

**Appeal Ref: APP/X3405/W/17/3180003**

**125 Rugeley Road, Hazelslade, Cannock WS12 0PG**

- 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 Peter Stoddard against the decision of Cannock Chase District Council.
  - The application Ref CH/17/026, dated 18 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 15 June 2017.
  - The development proposed is demolish existing detached bungalow and garage and construct detached two storey dwelling with integral garage.
- 

### 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 Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

### Reasons

3. The appeal site lies on a main road and is part of ribbon development on the edge of Hazelslade. It comprises a detached bungalow with gardens front and rear. The appeal site sits slightly above the road. The housing on the appeal site side of the road is of varying types, sizes, ages and styles. The majority of these properties are of red brick wall construction with pitched or gabled clay roof tiles.
4. The land rises up steeply from the road beyond the appeal property to mature woodland and heathland behind. On the opposite side of the road, the land is open which stretches down to a heathland and a small lake. This area is a nature reserve and has public access.
5. The appeal site lies within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The character of the AONB is formed by the open and undulating countryside including extensive areas of heathland and woodland.
6. Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.
7. The proposed development would replace the bungalow with a two storey house of contemporary design in white and grey render. The proposed house

would have a larger footprint than the bungalow. It would be taller than the bungalow but less high than the ridges of the properties either side. The proposed house would have a mono-pitch roof which would slope slightly from front to back and its eaves height at the front would be significantly higher than those of the adjacent properties.

8. When viewed from the Hazelslade nature reserve, the existing bungalow is prominent in the row of residential development, because of its cream render. The proposed new dwelling would be significantly larger and box like in form. Its shape, front elevation size and materials would be considerably different to the properties along the long row. It would stand out significantly and appear discordant when viewed from the road and from the nature reserve.
9. When viewed from the nature reserve and beyond, it would have the effect of drawing attention to itself within the landscape and would detract from the character and appearance of the wooded slope towards Beaudesert behind. Whilst landscaping to the front of the dwelling may soften the visual impact of the proposed dwelling to some extent, because of its materials, size and form, I consider that this would be unlikely to have a significant mitigating effect. For all of these reasons I therefore consider that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the AONB.
10. I have had regard to paragraph 60 of the Framework which makes it clear that planning decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. However, I have also had regard to paragraph 115 which makes it clear that great weight should be given to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB. This is a very strong requirement.
11. The existing bungalow is unremarkable in architectural style and the proposed new dwelling would offer modern accommodation. However this benefit does not outweigh the harm to the AONB I have found.
12. For the reasons set out above, I therefore conclude that the proposed development would have a unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the AONB and would be contrary to Policy CP14 of the *Cannock Chase Local Plan 2014* (the Local Plan) which seeks to protect, conserve and enhance the landscape character of the District including the AONB. It would also be contrary to both Policy CP3 of the Local Plan which sets out design requirements for new development and the design guidance in the Council's *Supplementary Planning Document – Design 2016*. It would also not accord with paragraph 115 of the Framework.

## **Conclusion**

13. For the reasons set out above, and having considered all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Mike Worden*

INSPECTOR