
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 February 2019

by G Jenkinson BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/J3720/W/18/3214385

Cotswold Close, 15 Admington, Shipston on Stour, Warwickshire CV36 4JN

- 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 Ms Grace Armstrong against the decision of Stratford-on-Avon District Council.
 - The application Ref 18/01909/FUL, dated 24 June 2018, was refused by notice dated 12 October 2018.
 - The development proposed was originally described as the 'demolition of existing garage and erection of new dwelling'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development in the banner heading above has been taken from the application and appeal forms. The decision notice however states 'full application for demolition of existing garage, erection of new dwelling and a creation of new associated access (Alternative scheme to that allowed under 16/02932/FUL). This more accurately describes the proposal. The Council made its decision on this basis and so have I.
3. Since the submission of the appeal, an updated version of the National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) (the Framework) has been published by the Government. This is a material consideration in planning decisions. In relation to the main issues in this appeal, Government policy has not materially changed, and it was not therefore necessary to invite any further comments from the different parties involved.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are: a) whether the site is a suitable location for a new dwelling having regard to the development plan and national policy; and b) the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Development Plan Policy

5. Policy CS.15 of the Stratford-on-Avon Core Strategy (the 'Core Strategy') sets out the hierarchy of settlements in the District. The Council classify Admington

as falling within 'all other settlements'. Within such settlements, development is restricted to small-scale community led projects, which meet a local need.

6. The appellant has not provided a local needs survey. She states that a new house is required in order to be more sustainable and in order to reduce costs of living. It is argued that if they were to move into the approved conversion it would be too small to accommodate their needs and would need to be further extended. However, these are personal circumstances and there is no guarantee that the appellant would continue to occupy the proposed dwelling.
7. Whilst there is a recognised need for additional housing to be provided across the district in accordance with policy CS.16, in this location the development plan restricts residential development to community led schemes only. The proposal would not therefore result in a community-led scheme or provide affordable housing for local people in accordance with policy and local housing need.
8. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policies CS.15 and AS.10 of the Core Strategy and with the provisions of the Framework. These together seek to ensure that in small scale settlements which are not identified in Policy CS.15 residential development is limited to small scale community led schemes which meet a need identified by the community.

Character and Appearance

9. The settlement of Admington comprises a small collection of houses set out in ribbon fashion along a country lane. The dwellings in the vicinity of the site are two storey detached or semi-detached houses. There are few bungalows in the settlement, most notably that adjacent to the appeal site
10. The appeal site comprises the garden area of the existing dwelling No 15. The existing dwelling is a traditional red brick dwelling. The garden runs alongside the road and accommodates a garage/store of moderate size. It is separated from the main house by a driveway and is partly screened from the road by a boundary hedge approximately two metres in height.
11. The proposed development is contemporary in design and a stark contrast to the traditional brick-built dwellings that would flank the property. Whilst a design, with sensitively chosen materials, could sit comfortably adjacent to the more traditional local vernacular, the contemporary design proposed would be a contrast of the old and new architectural styles and could sensitively blend in with the landscape and setting, particularly when viewed from the rural aspect and fields to south.
12. Nonetheless, the proposed new dwelling represents an increase in the built footprint on the site of over 300%. The proposed dwelling would occupy a considerably larger percentage of the site area than the existing garage and as such the plot ratio would be considerably higher than that of surrounding plots and therefore out of keeping with the character of the area.
13. The proposal would result in an over development of the site and as such would be contrary to policies CS.5, CS.9 CS.15 and AS.10 of the Core Strategy and to the provisions of the Framework. These seek, amongst other matters, to preserve and enhance the landscape character of the area and to achieve design which is locally distinct and minimises the impact on the local features.

Other Matters

14. The appellant highlights that insufficient consideration has been given to the permission granted on appeal for the conversion of the outbuilding to a dwelling. The appellants wish to move into the new home and it is a more practical solution to replace it in order to be a more sustainable way forward as they would need to extend it if built as it would not meet their needs. However, this scheme is not considered as a replacement dwelling. For a dwelling to be replaced one must first exist, and this is not the case, I have to consider what the circumstances are now in the context of adopted development plan policy. Whilst I recognise that for a period of time the conversion allowed at appeal could still take place this is not a fall-back position which would justify a much larger building on the site which would of itself be contrary to the development plan.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, and taking account of all other considerations, the appeal is dismissed.

Gemma Jenkinson

INSPECTOR