
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 July 2019

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/M3835/D/19/3227657

Rosedale, Richmond Road, Worthing, BN11 4AA

- 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 Mrs Eleanor Avery against the decision of Worthing Borough Council.
 - The application Ref AWDM/0099/19, dated 16 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 27 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as "*Construction of a new driveway to facilitate parking at the property. Works will include the removal of a section of the front wall. Removal of the existing curb and the construction of a new dropped curb. Groundwork's [sic] to enable the installation of a block paved area for vehicle parking and turning*".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, and upon highway safety.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal property forms part of a short terrace of three with deep front gardens and which are set behind a continuous stone and cobble wall that runs the length of their frontages at the back edge of the pavement and which continues in a curve to the west side running into Clifton Road. This arrangement is mirrored by a similar terrace of three to the east, positioned on the opposite side of the entrance into Treveor Close. Together, these six properties form a very distinctive group that share common features, including the consistent form and continuity of their front boundary enclosures.
4. The proposal would remove the boundary wall and a pedestrian gated entrance to the front of Rosedale, replacing it with brick piers to either side of an otherwise approximate 6m wide open frontage.

5. The removal of the wall would significantly disrupt the obvious visual harmony that currently exists between these terraced properties. The site sits outside of the immediately adjoining Richmond Road Conservation Area, to the east, and the Park Crescent Conservation to the west. Regardless, quality in the design of new development, and the need to ensure that development respects the character of an area, are key requirements of Saved Policy H16 of the Worthing Local Plan 2003 and Policy 16 of the Worthing Core Strategy 2011.
6. The works would appear as an obvious change that would be stark and out of keeping with the enclosed character and cohesion of the street scene at this point. Open frontages are not an immediate feature of these properties. Furthermore, the visual intrusion that would be created would be further exaggerated by the presence of a vehicle, when parked, that would dominate the frontage to the dwelling and which we be openly exposed to view in an incongruous and unsympathetic manner. For these reasons I find that there would be harm to the character and appearance of the area, and clear conflict with the development plan policies that I have identified above.

Highway Safety

7. The appeal site sits along a short stretch of road between two mini-roundabouts. I recognise that at times traffic moves between these at very slow speeds. However, during my mid-morning visit, I saw that traffic was fairly free flowing. I also saw that cars approaching the mini roundabout to the west from Clifton Road and turning left, past the appeal property, often did so without stopping when no other traffic was approaching the roundabout in an easterly direction along Richmond Road. By so doing, they were approaching the appeal site at speeds far in excess of the 8mph that the Highway Authority has assessed the visibility that would be provided by the proposed access would be suitable for. In these circumstances I share their concerns that a vehicle edging out of the appeal site would have the potential to cause significant conflict with those on the highway.
8. The proposed hardstand to the front of Rosedale would be 9m deep. This would have the potential to accommodate two cars parked in tandem. By so doing, any possible opportunity for the first car to turn on the site and leave in forward gear would be lost. In these circumstances the proposal would necessitate a reversing manoeuvre either into or out of the site. This adds further to my concern.
9. Overall, I find that the proposal would fail to provide a safe and suitable access to the site which would in turn have an unacceptable impact on highway safety. As such there would be direct conflict with paragraphs 108 and 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework insofar as it seeks to create places that are safe.

Other Matters

10. The appellant has referred to other open frontages in the locality, but I saw nothing that compared with the situation at Rosedale and the other associated properties within the terraced rows.
11. I observed the open frontage to the car park for the Church on the opposite side of Richmond Road. However, cars using that space had ample room to

turn and leave the car park in forward gear. Furthermore, the position of the entrance was different to the setting of the appeal property, with the access appearing to operate effectively as a limb of the adjoining roundabout. I could detect little similarity between this and the appeal proposal either in terms of visual impact or highway safety.

12. I appreciate that the property has been on the market for a while, but there is no substantive evidence to suggest that this is due to the absence of any off-street parking, which is a feature for many properties in the area. In any event, the desire for off-street parking would not outweigh the harms that I have identified.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given, I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area, and that it would unacceptably impact upon conditions of highway safety along Richmond Road. Accordingly, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR