



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 July 2019

by Sarah Colebourne MA, MRTPI

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

Decision date: 22 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Y2810/D/19/3228071

4 Oakham Lane, Staverton, Northamptonshire, NN11 6JQ

- 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 and Mrs C Ashby against the decision of Daventry District Council.
 - The application Ref DA/2018/0645, dated 24 August 2018, was refused by notice dated 8 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'the formation of a new vehicular access and two car parking spaces'.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this case are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Staverton Conservation Area and on highway safety with regard to the access.

Procedural matter

3. The application was determined on the basis of amended plans which show one parking space, rather than the two proposed originally. I have therefore based this appeal decision on the basis of one parking space.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. Oakham Lane is a narrow through road in the centre of the village centre. It is characterised on by predominantly stone boundary walls and stone buildings adjacent to and along both sides of the lane which provide a strong sense of enclosure. The appeal dwelling sits at one end of a mid C20th terrace of four dwellings, set back from the road. Whilst the boundary wall to the front of the appeal site may have been built at the time of the dwellings, by reason of its height and stone materials, it has an attractive appearance and forms part of a continuous length of wall with the adjacent property at Little Poplars which makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA.
5. The plans show that a 3.3m section of wall would be removed to accommodate the proposed parking space, just less than one third of the total wall along the frontage of the property. Although some sections of the wall in front of the terrace have already been removed, including at the adjacent property, those

gaps do not make a positive contribution to the street scene. The loss of this section of wall would add to that harm by opening up the frontage to an unacceptable degree and disrupting the sense of enclosure, in contrast to the prevailing enclosed character of the lane.

6. No 4 is a three bedroom dwelling that has no off street parking and due to the narrow width of the lane parking is not possible outside the property. The nearest on-street parking is further along the lane to the south and from what I saw that is limited and it seems likely that the occupiers would sometimes have to park further away around the village green. The proposal would therefore clearly provide some private and public benefit. However, as only one space could be accommodated, the benefit would not be significant. Whilst the harm would be less than substantial, it still carries considerable and important weight and I am not persuaded that in this case, the public benefit is sufficient to outweigh the harm that would be caused.
7. I conclude that for these reasons, the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Staverton CA. It would be contrary to the Council's development plan policies R1 (5) (9), S10 (i) and BN5 of the adopted West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2014 and Saved Policies GN1 (b), GN2 (b) (e), EN2 and EN42 (a) (c) of the adopted Daventry District Local Plan 1997 which seek to protect the character and appearance of areas, including CA's. The National Planning Policy Framework has similar objectives.

Highway safety

8. At the time of the Council's decision, no swept path analysis for turning was provided. Since then, as part of the appellant's statement, a swept path analysis has been submitted (drawing no 18/541.02).
9. However, the Highways Authority's comments dated 21 June 2019 say that the appellant has failed to provide the dimensions required by the County Council's adopted Parking Standards document or a swept path analysis. Those comments appear to be based on the original proposal for two spaces and it is unclear to me whether or not the HA has seen the swept path analysis for one vehicle submitted with the appellant's statement. However, the comments go on to say that only one correctly dimensioned space could be accommodated. It seems to me therefore that latest the submitted plan may overcome the Council's objection in this respect but in the absence of further information from the HA I am unable to reach a conclusion on this matter.

Conclusion

10. Even if I had found that the proposal would overcome the HA's concerns regarding highway safety, my findings regarding the effect on the CA are significant and overriding. The proposal would be contrary to the development plan policies referred to earlier and to the Framework. There are no material considerations that justify determining the appeal otherwise and the appeal should be dismissed.

Sarah Colebourne

Inspector