



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 July 2019

by P Mileham BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/V2635/W/19/3227348

14 Stoke Road, Methwold, Thetford IP26 4PE

- 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 Jack Butcher against the decision of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00260/F, dated 29 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 16 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is a new dwelling and detached garage (self build).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area with regard to its relationship with the surrounding development.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises the rear garden of No.14 Stoke Road. The area surrounding the appeal site in this part of Stoke Road is characterised by pairs of semi-detached dwellings set in relatively large rear gardens which are long yet narrow in width. Views between the dwellings extend beyond into the open countryside across arable land. The host property is a rendered semi-detached dwelling with driveway access to the side, and the rear garden currently contains a static caravan and outbuildings. To the sides and rear, the property is bound by close board fencing which rises from a height of around 1.8 metres to around 2 metres at its highest point where it adjoins the fields to the rear.
4. The linear form of development along Stoke Road combined with the regular pairs of semi-detached dwellings create a uniformity to the surroundings which make a significant contribution to the overall character of the area. The proposal would result in the introduction of a new dwelling located in the rear garden of the host property, behind the established rear building line of properties on the eastern side of the road. The proposal would sit on a relatively cramped plot that would be of a distinctly different size and layout to the immediately adjoining properties which are long and narrow.
5. The introduction of a dwelling in the rear garden would clearly alter the rhythm of dwellings in the area when viewed from Stoke Road and its footway. The

proposed dwelling would also have the effect of removing the long views into the countryside afforded between the host property and the pair of dwellings south of the appeal site.

6. From my observations of the site and the surrounding area, there are no other dwellings located in the rear gardens of the dwellings in this area. The proposed dwelling would therefore be in stark contrast with the surrounding area and have an adverse impact on the wider street scene. I consider that the proposal would not be in keeping with the pattern of development in the surrounding area.
7. As such, I conclude that the proposed development would significantly harm the street scene and result in a form of development that would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would be contrary to Policies CS06 (second bullet) and CS08 (third bullet) of the Local Development Framework - Core Strategy, and Policy DM15 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan.
8. Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that permission for development should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area. I consider that the proposal does not fulfil the requirements of Framework paragraph 130. This adds to the harm that I have found in respect of the development plan.

Other matters

9. The appellant has identified that the site is located inside the settlement boundary, and therefore in general terms would be a sustainable location where the principle of development would normally be supported. Added to this, I recognise that the proposal would provide an opportunity for a self-build project that would allow the appellant to remain in the village. I also agree with the appellant that adequate garden provision would be made for the proposed and host dwellings, and that acceptable access and parking arrangements would be made. However, these matters do not alter or outweigh the significant harm I have identified to the character and appearance of the area.
10. Representations had been received raising concerns regarding the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbours due to overlooking of their rear gardens. The proposal includes first floor windows in both side elevations that could result in overlooking. Notwithstanding this, I consider that the scale of harm identified to the character and appearance of the area to be such that my conclusions on this decision would not be altered.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

P Mileham

Inspector