



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 August 2019

by David Spencer BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 2 September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/U2615/W/19/3228894

27 Ranworth Drive, Ormesby St Margaret, Great Yarmouth NR29 3SH

- 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 D Shreeve against the decision of Great Yarmouth Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 06/18/0604/F, dated 8 October 2018, was refused by notice dated 27 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is erection of bungalow with vehicular access.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. There are three main issues:
 - (i) The effect of the proposed bungalow on the character and appearance of the locality;
 - (ii) Whether the proposed development would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants, with regard to the provision of private amenity space; and
 - (iii) The effect of the proposed parking arrangement on highway safety in Ranworth Drive.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal site comprises a triangular area of land which forms a side garden to a bungalow dwelling at No.27 Ranworth Drive. The site is positioned at the corner of Ranworth Drive and Thurne Way. Immediately to the north of the site is a bungalow at No.1 Thurne Way. The site is separated from the mouth of the road junction by an area of grass verge and footway. The area is predominantly characterised by bungalows although to the east of the junction on the opposite side of Thurne Way are two storey houses.
4. No.27 is the last in a row of seven bungalows which are similarly orientated with front facing gables towards Ranworth Drive. There is no appreciable staggered or stepped arrangement to the layout of these bungalows such that they appear as a rhythmic row. Whilst there are only moderate gaps between these bungalows, they are nonetheless set-back from the highway by open front gardens lending a particular spacious quality to this part of the village.

This arrangement is generally mirrored in the bungalows on the opposite side of Ranworth Drive. The spacious character of the locality is further reinforced by the open junction arrangements where Ranworth Drive meets Thurne Way at the appeal site and a short distance to the west at Barton Way.

5. The appeal proposal would be conspicuously set forward of the alignment of the host row of bungalows containing the adjacent No.27. Notwithstanding the highway grass verge at the junction mouth, the proposed dwelling would incongruously intrude into the general openness around the junction with Thurne Way. The result would be a harmful loss of the overall planned spaciousness at these junctions when the estate was originally conceived, similar to that laid out at Barton Way. The set forward position of the proposed L-shaped bungalow on the relatively small triangular parcel of land means there would be a particularly noticeable and discordantly tight relationship to the footway. This would be reinforced by the tangibly wider frontage onto Ranworth Drive of the proposed bungalow. This arrangement would be harmfully at odds with the prevailing character and would appear in the street scene of Ranworth Drive as a starkly cramped development.
6. The appellant submits that the density of the appeal proposal would be broadly comparable to elsewhere on Ranworth Drive. That may stem from it being a smaller property on a smaller site rather than harmoniously reflecting the established pattern and layout of surrounding housing. The awkwardly set forward position and generally parsimonious relationship of the dwelling to its front, rear boundaries mean it would not share the spacious layout of surrounding dwellings despite the slightly wider degree of separation to No.27 than that found elsewhere between bungalows on Ranworth Drive. The harmfully confined and restricted appearance within its plot would be accentuated by its prominent corner position. I observed the backdrop of the two-storey housing on Thurne Way to the east, but I am not persuaded this would lessen the harmful impact of the appeal proposal which would be readily seen within its host location of the adjoining bungalows on Ranworth Drive.
7. I therefore conclude that the proposed bungalow would have a significantly adverse effect on the character and appearance of the locality. It would be contrary to Policy CS9 of the Great Yarmouth Local Plan Core Strategy 2013-2030 (the Core Strategy) and Policies HOU7 and HOU17 of the Great Yarmouth Borough-Wide Local Plan 2001 (the Local Plan) which require, amongst other things, that all new development appropriately responds to the local context and creates attractive places. It would also fail to accord with paragraphs 124, 127 and 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which emphasise the importance of securing well-designed places that add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good layout and are sympathetic to local character and appearance.

Living Conditions

8. Allowing for the property and two proposed parking spaces there is only a very modest amount of residual land to provide amenity space for the dwelling. Due to the L-shaped footprint of the dwelling within the triangular plot this leaves two exposed small fragmented parcels of land at the front of the property and a very narrow gloomy strip to the rear (north) of the dwelling. Consequently, the only meaningful space is to the side (east) of the dwelling adjacent to the footway at the junction of Ranworth Drive and Thurne Way. To ensure privacy,

at this very public corner point, the plans show a means of enclosure by way of a close boarded fence 1.8 metres in height.

9. I note there are no local standards for private amenity space but in plain contrast to the layout of surrounding housing, this small area of private amenity space would be particularly miserable in both its scale and its highly enclosed ambience and outlook. Whilst it may be technically possible to accommodate a patio area sufficient for a wheelchair user to get outside, it would not be an attractive space to sit out and would have limited functionality to serve multiple outdoor purposes such as drying clothes, growing plants or as an area for children to play.
10. I therefore conclude that the appeal proposal would not provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants, with regard to the provision of private amenity space. It would be contrary to Core Strategy Policy CS9 and Local Plan Policies HOU7 and HOU17 which require, amongst other things, for new housing in the Borough to be well-designed and provide for attractive, functional places. It would also fail to accord with paragraphs 124 and 127 of the NPPF which require well-designed places including, amongst other things, places that promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for future users.

Highway Safety

11. The appeal proposal would provide for two off-road parking spaces. Whilst these spaces are narrow at approximately 2.4 metres in width compared to the local highway authority's (LHA) standard of 2.5 metres, there is no persuasive evidence that they cannot accommodate an average sized family car or would deter the strong habitual desire to park as close to a property as possible. I attach appreciable weight to the fact that LHA did not object to the proposal.
12. In the event that vehicles did not use the proposed parking spaces, I observed that most properties in this part of the village have off-street parking thus reducing the potential for parking stress. The width of Ranworth Drive would also facilitate safe on-street parking. The appeal site is adjacent to the junction with Thurne Way but there is little to indicate that on-street parking associated with the appeal proposal would have a severe impact on highway safety at what is a cul-de-sac location with relatively low volumes of traffic movements.
13. I therefore conclude that the proposed parking arrangement would not have a severe impact on highway safety in Ranworth Drive. In this respect the proposal would accord with the requirements of Core Strategy Policy CS9 to provide parking suitable for the use and location of the development.

Planning Balance and conclusion

14. On matters of design, appearance and living conditions, the proposal would be contrary to policies of the development plan. These policies are consistent with latest national policy and therefore up-to-date. I am required by law to determine the appeal in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
15. There is little dispute that the Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land. As such, the NPPF, which is an important material consideration, advises at paragraph 11(d), to consider the

appeal proposal from the perspective of granting planning permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

16. The appeal site is sustainably located in a sizeable village and within easy walking distance of a range of services and facilities. It would also not give rise to any adverse highway safety issues. These are environmental and social benefits that weigh appreciably in favour of the proposal. The proposal would also provide an additional dwelling in an area where housing need is not being met. As a small-scale development it would be well-placed to be built-out quickly, meeting a demand for self-build housing and in doing so would support tradespeople and constructors. It is, however, only a single dwelling and so the weight I attach to these social and economic benefits is no more than modest.
17. On the other hand, I have identified that the appeal proposal would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the locality and provide a particularly poor living environment for future occupants in respect of private amenity space. High quality buildings and places are fundamental to achieving sustainable development that by its very nature endures and is acceptable to existing and future local communities. As such I attach significant weight to these environmental and social harms.
18. In engaging the tilted balance, I have concluded that the identified harms would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the relatively modest benefits of the appeal proposal. As such it would not amount to the sustainable development that should be granted planning permission through the mechanism of paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF. There are no material considerations or other matters raised that lead me to conclude other than that the appeal should be dismissed for the reasons given.

David Spencer

Inspector.