
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 August 2019

by S D Castle BSC(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3425/W/19/3231728

Land Adjacent 15 Buckland Road, Parkside, Stafford ST16 1UA

- 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 Bendall against the decision of Stafford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 18/29638/FUL, dated 20 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 17 January 2019.
 - The development proposed is new detached dwelling and creation new access and dropped kerb.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a corner plot located within an established residential area, adjoining Buckland Road to the north and Marsworth Way to the east. The site adjoins the side boundary of 15 Buckland Road to the west and the rear boundary of 2 Marsworth Way to the South. As a corner plot, the site is prominent in views both from Buckland Road and Marsworth Way. The site is currently an informal area of open grass land, including a couple of small trees. Such areas of incidental open space are characteristic of the surrounding area and are often located adjacent to the flank elevations of dwellings. The wider estate includes significant areas of open green space.
4. Surrounding dwellings are generally arranged in cohesive groupings, set back from the highway along consistent building lines and with back-to-back gardens. The dwellings forming the site's surroundings are predominantly detached, two-storey, pitch-roofed and with landscaped front gardens with low level hedges or open lawns. The combination of detached dwellings with significant areas of both public and private landscaping gives a spacious and verdant character to the area.
5. Whilst the design of the proposed dwelling is reflective of the architectural style of surrounding dwellings, it would be located on a plot of significantly smaller width than the surrounding dwellings that would form its immediate street scene.

6. The proposed dwelling would be located immediately adjacent to the boundary with No 15 and would be viewed as a continuation of the run of street fronting dwellings at Nos 15 to 23. There would, however, be significantly less space at first floor level between the proposed dwelling and No 15 than is characteristic of the existing street scene. Consequently, the proposed dwelling would appear out of kilter with the existing development in the area, representing a discordant feature in the street scene.
7. Furthermore, whilst a limited landscape buffer would be retained to the east of the dwelling, the proximity of the blank flank elevation of the proposed dwelling to the highway would not be typical of the surrounding area. The side elevation of the proposed dwelling would provide limited visual relief and, given the loss of landscaping, would appear incongruous within the spacious and verdant context of its surroundings.
8. I note that the proposed dwelling would be of a similar width to the dwellings at 19, 21 and 23 Buckland Road were it not for the side garages attached to those existing properties. The space above these side garages is, however, integral to creating the existing spacious character of the appeal site's immediate surroundings.
9. I also note that there is some variation in plot widths and built form to plot area ratios within the wider estate, including at Chauldren Road. This does not, however, alter the harm to the identified character of the surrounding area of the appeal site as set out above.
10. For the reasons above, the proposal would have a significantly harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would not accord with policy N1 criteria (g) and (h) of The Plan for Stafford Borough (2014) which seeks, amongst other things, to secure developments of a high standard of design, taking in to account the local character, context, density and landscape. Nor would the proposal accord with the provisions of the Council's Design Supplementary Planning Document (2018) which requires, amongst other things, that development should be designed in a contextually sensitive manner to enhance and reinforce the character of the built environment. Furthermore, the proposal would not accord with chapter twelve of the National Planning Policy Framework, including paragraphs 124 and 127, which seek well designed places and to deliver good design that is sympathetic to the local character.

Other Matter

11. I acknowledge that the proposal would contribute towards housing supply and to the economy during its construction and, afterwards, through future residents' support for local services. Being for one property, however, it would only make a very limited contribution, and this significantly limits the weight I attach to these benefits.
12. Overall, there are no material considerations, either individually or in combination, of sufficient weight to outweigh the conflict with the development plan, nor do they indicate that the proposal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

S D Castle

INSPECTOR