



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 August 2019

by Bhupinder Thandi BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/D0515/W/19/3224828

Old Mill House, 34 The Bank, Parson Drove, Cambridgeshire PE13 4JD

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Martin Lee against the decision of Fenland District Council.
 - The application Ref F/YR18/1127/O, dated 26 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 18 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing garage and erection of a single dwelling and two new garages within garden amenity land.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. Outline planning permission is sought with access to be considered at this stage. I have determined the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises part of the rear garden of the host property which is located within a ribbon of existing development towards the northern edge of the village. Whilst properties within this part of the village vary in terms of design, age and plot size they are arranged in a distinct linear manner with views of open countryside beyond. There is some variety in terms of the exact distance that dwellings are set back behind the road frontage but this does not alter the prevailing character of a linear settlement with little backland development. This distinctive pattern of development contributes significantly to the character of the settlement as a whole.
5. The prominence of the development would be reduced as a result of its position set back from the road, however this arrangement would significantly be at odds with the established linear pattern of built form through the introduction of a new dwelling and associated residential paraphernalia in the rear garden. Whilst views of the new dwelling would be screened to some degree by the existing house and planting it is likely that it would be visible through gaps in the building line, particularly as the existing garage would be demolished. It

would also be viewed from the rear windows of neighbouring properties such that the change in the built form of the area would be noticeable from a number of public and private vantage points. The development would significantly change the character and appearance of the site having an urbanising effect upon it. The development would be at odds with the established pattern of development and would undermine the character of the area. Given the consistency in the form of this part of the village, I attach significant weight to this matter.

6. My attention has been drawn to a backland development closer to the village core south of the appeal site. However, from the details before me, it appears that the merits and circumstances of the scheme are materially different to those of the appeal proposal. In any case, every appeal must be considered on its own merits. The presence of another development in the area does not justify the harm that I have identified.
7. For those reasons the development would be contrary to Policy LP16(d) of the Fenland Local Plan (2014) which requires development to make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness and character, reinforce local identity and respect settlement pattern.

Other Matters

8. The appellant questions the Council's current five-year housing supply position and considers the development would contribute to the district's housing need. The Council state that it can demonstrate a supply of 7.18 years. There is little substantive evidence before me to contradict the Council's position. I have paid regard to this matter. The development would make a modest contribution to local housing need and support local facilities. However, even if the Council was unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing these modest benefits would be significantly and demonstrably outweighed by the harm that I have identified.
9. For the reasons outlined above the appeal is dismissed.

B Thandi

INSPECTOR