



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 September 2019 by Darren Ellis MPlan

Decision by P J Davies BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/R2520/W/19/3234811

9 Ancaster Drive, Sleaford, NG34 7LY

- 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 Barton against the decision of North Kesteven District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/0555/FUL, dated 18 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 22 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a two storey, two bedroom house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

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

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site forms the side garden area of No 9 Ancaster Drive and abuts the side boundary of No 7, at the junction with Wesley Close. The site is in a residential area that consists of a mix of detached two-storey dwellings and bungalows.
 5. The proposed dwelling would largely respect the modest architectural style of the two-storey houses in front and adjacent. As a result of the single-storey aspect to the side, it would also follow the style of the bungalows to the rear. However, while the depth of the garden would be similar to the rear garden at No 9, in order to respect building lines, the depth of the house would be narrow. In views from the east, it would not be in keeping with the uniform scale of the existing two-storey dwellings, in particular No 9. The proposal would therefore appear as an obvious attempt to fit a dwelling into a constrained plot resulting in a visually contrived form of development.
 6. The adjoining bungalows have white boarding above a front bay window, and while the external finish to the first-floor of the rear elevation seeks to match this, the elevated position of the boarding would be visually dominant and
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incongruous. Furthermore, the absence of first-floor rear windows would create a bleak façade that would also not be in keeping with the adjacent two-storey houses. Although the dwelling would be set back from the kerb, owing to the low height of the bungalows and open nature of the site, these adverse effects would be readily apparent on the approach from the south. The appellant has stated that the boarding to the rear elevation could be replaced with hung tiles, however while this might be a more sympathetic approach, the lack of fenestration would still be a significant drawback to the scheme. Furthermore, whilst high level windows have been considered, these would be disproportionate features within a prominent elevation, and would not be an acceptable design solution.

7. The existing trees to the side of the site would provide a degree of screening, but they are individual specimens set apart from one another. They would not therefore be a fully effective screen, and as they are deciduous this limited screening would not be permanent all year round. The provision of pleached trees to the northern boundary would also not be sufficient to screen the uncharacteristic scale and appearance of the development which would remain prominent in the street scene.
8. I accept that given the existing boundary walls and that the proposed dwelling would be set well within the plot, there would be no unacceptable effects on the openness of the street in this corner location. However, this would not justify the harm arising from the design and contrived scale of the development.
9. I have had regard to paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework'), which states that design should not be used as a valid reason to object to development. However, the Framework clarifies that proposals should accord with clear expectations in plan policies, and permission 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 have found that the proposal would be unacceptable for this reason.
10. The development would boost the supply and choice of housing, but its contribution would be modest and carries limited weight in support of the proposal. There would also be a small social benefit in providing an extra housing unit. Economic advantages would also arise from the construction and occupation of a new house. However, the harm to the character and appearance of the area identified would be significant and as a result the environmental role of sustainable development would not be achieved.
11. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the proposed dwelling would cause material harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would be contrary to the objective of sustainable development set out in the Framework and Policy LP1 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2017 (LP). It would also conflict with LP Policies LP2 and LP26, which amongst other things require development to achieve high quality sustainable design that contribute positively to the character and appearance of an area.

Other Matter

12. I have been referred to a nearby dwelling at 46 London Road that was granted planning permission in 2015. However, this is in a different context to the appeal proposal and I am not aware of the circumstances in which permission

was granted. Local and national planning policy has been updated since then and I cannot be sure that this development is comparable to the proposal. In any case, this appeal has been determined on its own merits.

Conclusion and recommendation

13. The benefits that would arise from the proposal would not outweigh the harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Darren Ellis

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

P J Davies

INSPECTOR