



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 November 2019

by D Peppitt BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19th December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/V2825/D/19/3232906

18 Eastfield Road, Duston, Northampton NN5 6TQ

- 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 Gordon Knight against the decision of Northampton Borough Council.
 - The application Ref N/2019/0369, dated 19 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 3 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is create a new parking area outside of property (18 Eastfield Road) including dropped kerb, involving the removal of part of grassed area and repositioning of footpath.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located on a wide tree-lined road that is residential in character, with defined parking bays to one side of the road. The section of road on which the site is located is unique in its design when compared to the rest of the road, because of the large grassed areas and the uniform rows of terraced houses which are set back from the road. The large grassed areas and the siting of the terraced houses makes a significant and distinctive contribution to the pleasant and spacious character of the area.
4. The proposed development would remove part of the existing roadside grass verge to provide access into the off-road parking for two vehicles. The parking area itself would remove all of the grassed area for the width of No 18 Eastfield Road together, with a proportion of the existing footway. The introduction of a hard surface in this area would disrupt the current pattern of development in the area. It would interrupt the uniformity and symmetry with the terrace row on the opposite side of the road which currently exists. It would create an incongruous feature in the existing street scene by reducing the expanse, and therefore the significance of, the raised grassed area. This would bring parked vehicles closer to the existing dwellings and would upset the current pattern of development, therefore, the overall change that would result would harm the character and appearance of the area.

5. The appellant has referred me to a similar scheme which was granted planning permission¹ at No 11A Eastfield Road, which is located opposite the site. I have not been provided with the full details of the planning circumstances which lead the Council to conclude that this scheme was acceptable. As no copies of the approved plans for No 11A have been presented to me, I am unable to draw a direct comparison between the approved scheme and the appeal scheme before me. In any event each application and appeal must be determined on its own merits
6. I acknowledge that the appellant has offered to reduce the size of the parking area to that used at No 11A. However, I do not have any detailed plans for this suggested alternative before me and I have to assess the proposal and plans as submitted.
7. Consequently, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, it would be contrary to Policy S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014), Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan (1997) and Policy H5 of the Duston Neighbourhood Plan (2015). These policies, amongst other things, seek new development to achieve high quality design and reflect the character of its surroundings.

Other Matters

8. I note the appellant has suggested that the existing street parking is problematic and more off-road parking would be of benefit to the area. It has also been suggested that the grassed area is not frequently cut and is not used by local residents. However, I only give these claims limited weight, as I do not have substantive evidence before me to support them.
9. The issue of land ownership for the proposed development has been raised by the Council, however, this is not a planning matter for the determination of this appeal.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

D Peppitt

INSPECTOR

¹ Planning application reference N/2018/1313