
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 December 2019

by A Denby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R1845/W/19/3237792

2 Oldnall Road, Kidderminster DY10 3HW

- 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 Billingsley against the decision of Wyre Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref: 19/0372/FULL, dated 14 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 1 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is new three-bedroom dwelling house with associated parking and gardens.
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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 surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The site is located within a predominantly residential area and is currently a vacant plot of land situated between existing dwellings. There is a linear arrangement to the development along the northern side of Oldnall Road, which climbs up steeply from its junction with Chester Road South. Whilst there is variety in the size and design of the dwellings, their heights generally follow the level change in the road, providing a stepped appearance.
4. The existing dwellings in the vicinity of the site are also set well back from their frontages and in an elevated position. A number have driveway access to the site and their front boundaries are generally defined by low level boundary walls with soft landscaping to the frontages.
5. The appeal site provides a gap between existing dwellings and the site therefore has a spacious and open character, providing relief from the built form, and contributing positively to the character of the surrounding area.
6. The appeal scheme comprises a two-storey dwelling that would be noticeably narrower than existing development along Oldnall Road. The proposal includes a pitched roof which would have a bulky appearance and be at odds with the prevailing character of development in the surrounding area. The eaves and ridge height of the proposed dwelling would also be lower than adjacent

- development and so would not follow the scale and stepped arrangement of development along Oldnall Road.
7. Although the proposal would retain gaps between the built development these would be substantially less than others in the vicinity. As a result, the development would not retain the established open character of the site or reflect the character of development in the surrounding area. The appellant states the gaps to the side boundaries would be similar to those permitted on new residential schemes. Nevertheless, I must consider the appeal scheme on the basis of the existing character and appearance of the site and surrounding area, and each site is to be determined on its own merits.
 8. The proposed dwelling would be significantly different in appearance to the adjacent dwelling at No 2 Oldnall Road, which is a wider semi-detached property with a hipped roof. The proposed dwelling by contrast is a narrower, detached dwelling with a pitched roof, and lower eaves and ridge height. Whilst some aspects of the design would reflect that of No 2, such as the canopy and proposed materials, these would not be sufficient to mitigate the overall incongruity of the proposed dwelling.
 9. The proposal includes works to the site frontage to create parking spaces. It is noted that there is some existing paving to the site frontage and there are properties in the vicinity which also have parking to the side and frontage. However, those parking areas are not dominant features within the street scene, being visually screened by substantial areas of soft landscaping. This would not be the case with the appeal scheme.
 10. The proposal would result in the removal of the existing landscaping to the front of No 2, and whilst some new planting is proposed, this would be minimal and have limited visual impact. The parking areas would dominate the site frontage, resulting in a harsh appearance that would be at odds with the established character and appearance of development in the surrounding area.
 11. As such the development would fail to respond to the adjacent properties in terms of size, design and layout. It would visually be separate and stand out as an incongruous addition within the street scene, at odds with the established pattern of development.
 12. I consider it would result in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy CP11 of the Wyre Forest District Council Core Strategy, 2010 and Policy SAL.UP7 of the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan, 2013 which seek to ensure that all developments achieve the highest quality design, integrating well with the street scene and, reflecting and demonstrating a thorough understanding of site context.
 13. For the same reasons, the proposal would also fail to achieve the high-quality design requirements of the Council's Supplementary Planning Document: Design Guidance, 2015 which is relevant to all proposed development and Section 12: Achieving well-designed places, of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2019 (the Framework)
 14. That the proposal could provide for adequate drainage, pedestrian visibility, cycle storage, an active frontage and secure private outdoor areas would have

a neutral effect and these matters do not, therefore, weigh in favour of the appeal.

Other Matters

15. The appellant has stated that the Council were unwilling to enter into negotiations during the application process, though the appellant would be willing to consider amendments to the appeal scheme. It is not the role of the appeal process to evolve a scheme. If the appellant considers that amending their application proposals would overcome the Council's reason for refusal, then they should make a fresh planning application. This is therefore not a matter which I can consider as part of this appeal.
16. It is noted that the site is not covered by any special designations such as conservation area or listed building, and the Council have not made any reference to such in the determination of the application. As detailed above Section 12 of the Framework relates to achieving well-designed places, which is relevant to the appeal proposal.
17. Whilst the appellant has attempted to address the Council's objections to a previous scheme on the site, having considered the proposal on its own merits, this does not alter the harmful effects I have found. Therefore, having considered the appeal on its merits these other matters do not, therefore, lead me to a different conclusion.

Planning Balance

18. The Council acknowledges that it cannot demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply which means that the approach set out in paragraph 11 d) of the Framework is engaged.
19. There is no detailed information before me with regards to the scale of the Council's housing land supply shortfall, though the provision of only one dwelling could only have a limited benefit in relation to boosting the supply of housing.
20. The proposals would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Although I recognise the important contribution small sites can make to meeting the housing requirement of an area, the harm I have identified means that adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the limited benefits, when assessed against the Framework as a whole. Other considerations do not indicate that a decision should be taken other than in accordance with the development plan.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

A Denby

INSPECTOR