



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 October 2019 by John Gunn DipTP Dip DBE MRTPI

Decision by V Lucas LLB (Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: **23 January 2020**

**Appeal Ref: APP/C3240/W/19/3234704
7 -12 Beaconsfield, TELFORD, TF3 1NF**

- 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 Antoine Sedik, York Montague Ltd, against the decision of Telford and Wrekin Council.
 - The application Ref TWC/2018/0972, dated 01 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 10 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is four two bedroom flats at roof level.
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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.

Preliminary Matters

3. Notwithstanding the description of development set out above, which is taken from the application form, it is clear from the plans and accompanying details that the development comprises the creation of an additional floor to facilitate the formation of 2 no. flats. The Council dealt with the proposal on this basis and so shall I.

Main Issues

4. The main issues in this case are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area;
 - whether suitable provision is made for car parking; and
 - impact on living conditions of residents arising from parking and waste management

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and appearance of the area

5. The appeal site comprises part of a three storey block of apartments with flat roofs. The repetitive floor plan of similar apartments produces a simple rhythm to the building which is punctuated by recessed access points and stair wells. To the south of the building a private amenity space is provided for the residents, within which waste and storage facilities are provided. A short cul-de-sac runs parallel to the southern boundary of the appeal site providing rear access for pedestrians, and a small area of communal car parking.
6. The estate was planned in a comprehensive manner. Whilst there are existing four storey elements on the estate, including a block immediately to the east of the appeal site, they appear as specific design elements providing focal points to the area. The addition of two apartments would add a fourth storey to the property on a predominantly three storey development and would significantly increase the volume of the block. The appeal proposal would unbalance the existing design and would change the overall appearance of the building in a negative manner.
7. Consequently, I conclude that the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and would be contrary to Policy BE1 of the Telford and Wrekin Local Plan 2011-2031 – adopted January 2018 (LP), and Part 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which jointly require developments to respond positively to their context and be sympathetic to local character.

Car parking

8. The appeal site lies in a sustainable location near local facilities. A regular bus service runs along Brookside Avenue immediately to the north of the appeal site and there is good access to the Telford and Wrekin cycle network. Notwithstanding this, it is evident that there is still a reliance on the car as a mode of transport for local residents with 8 of the 12 parking spaces being occupied when I visited during the middle of the day. It is likely that the occupancy rate would be higher in the early morning, during the evening and at weekends. In this regard I have considered the survey work undertaken by the Council, as mentioned in their report, which indicates that before 9 am and after 5pm almost all available car spaces were occupied.
9. From my observations I noted that it would be impractical to provide additional parking spaces within the appeal site, without using existing landscaped areas or garden areas located directly adjacent habitable rooms of existing properties. This would have a significant and adverse effect on the living conditions of existing residents and the visual amenity of the area. Consequently, any additional car parking demand arising from the development would have to rely on the existing parking spaces or on-street parking.
10. Notwithstanding the views expressed by the Council, I do not agree that the appeal proposal would cause a significant impact upon the existing parking arrangements. Whilst it is possible that future occupiers would have access to a car any increase in parking would be limited. From my observations the estate

roads appeared lightly trafficked and no parking restrictions were in place on Beaconsfield. Any on-street parking arising from the development would not have a severe impact on the way the roads function.

11. I acknowledge that the appellant has made provision for additional cycle storage within the appeal site and suggests that access by motorised vehicles should be discouraged so as to avoid adverse impacts on nearby properties by reason of noise, dust, odour or light pollution. Whilst recognising the benefits of sustainable forms of transport these must be weighed against any adverse impacts on the highway network.
12. On balance, I conclude that the development would not cause demonstrable harm to the functioning of the highway network, or to the health and safety of residents. Consequently, the development would not be contrary to Policy C4 and C5 of the LP, or Part 9 of the Framework, which jointly seek to support sustainable developments.

Living conditions

13. The appeal proposals include a provision for cycle and bin storage adjacent to an existing facility designed to accommodate the needs of existing residents creating an enclosed pathway to the rear door of the apartment block. Whilst these facilities would have the capacity to support the new accommodation they would not benefit from any natural surveillance from the adjacent cul-de-sac or nearby properties.
14. As a result, I conclude that the proposal would be likely to increase residents' fears for their safety when accessing the storage facilities or the nearby parking spaces. Consequently, the development would be contrary to Policies BE1 and ER8 of the LP, and Part 12 of the Framework which jointly seek to provide a secure environment which is safe, attractive and convenient for existing and future users.

Other matters

15. There is no dispute between the parties that the appeal site is located within a sustainable location where the principle of new housing development is supported by policies in the development plan.
16. The appellant acknowledges that the Council can demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply but argues that the appeal proposals could contribute to the windfall allowance of 360 dwellings identified. Whilst this may be the case the impact would be limited, and the requirement could be satisfied elsewhere.

Conclusion and Recommendation

17. I conclude that the harm to the character and appearance of the area, and to the living conditions of existing and future residents, outweighs the limited benefits of the scheme, and there are no material considerations that would lead me to determine the appeal other than in accordance with the development plan.

18. For these reasons I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Gunn

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

V Lucas

INSPECTOR