



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 February 2020

by M Russell BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/C3240/W/19/3238847

94 Stanmore Drive, Trench, Telford, Shropshire TF2 7DG

- 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 Philip Carter against the decision of Telford and Wrekin Council.
 - The application Ref TWC/2019/0546, dated 4 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 2 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is housing.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The planning application forms confirm that 2 units are proposed. The proposal is in outline form with all matters reserved. I have therefore taken the submitted site layout plan indicating the position of 2 semi-detached dwellings, landscaping and access details as well as the proposed floor and elevation plans as being indicative only for the purposes of my assessment.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. Stanmore Drive is characterised by predominantly two-storey detached and semi-detached dwellings. Existing dwellings are generally aligned with each other and positioned parallel to the boundary with the highway, more often within rectangular plots with front and rear gardens. The appeal site is roughly triangular in shape and is positioned close to the head of a cul-de-sac. It sits between the side boundary of No 94 Stanmore Drive and a public footpath. Allotments with associated single storey buildings are situated to the other side of the footpath. An area of woodland sits at a higher level to the site between the rear boundary and the A518.
5. The narrow proportions of the site towards the front boundary with Stanmore Drive means the front of the site would be likely to be dominated by hard surfacing for a shared access drive. The indicative drawings illustrate how the shape of the site would result in the dwellings being positioned towards the centre of the plot, set back from and at an angle relative to the general alignment of neighbouring dwellings on this side of Stanmore Drive. As a result

of these factors, the proposal would appear at odds with the existing street pattern. There is no substantive evidence before me to demonstrate that 2 dwellings could be laid out in a way which better relates to existing dwellings. The position of buildings on the allotments does not convince me that the development would positively contribute to the character and appearance of the street scene.

6. My attention has been drawn to a 'curving development' at the opposite end of the street. My observations on site were that these dwellings are angled relative to a circular section of the road. Those particular dwellings are still similarly aligned with immediate neighbouring dwellings and are not directly comparable to the proposal.
7. To conclude, the development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, in that regard, the development would conflict with Policies SP1 (Telford), SP4 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development) and BE1 (Design Criteria) of the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan (2018) which amongst other things support development in Telford unless it is contrary to policies in the Local Plan and seek development which respects and responds positively to its context and enhances the quality of the local built environment.

Other Matters

8. The appellant contends that, whilst the Council can demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, the Local Plan makes clear that windfall sites are part of its strategy to meet its housing target. Even so, this should not be at the expense of the character and appearance of the area.
9. Whether or not the appellant was given sufficient time to respond to the Council's concerns during the planning application process is not a matter which is material to my assessment of the proposal. In any case, the Council had fundamental design concerns based on the constraints of the site and quantum of development proposed. On this basis, I am not persuaded by the evidence before me that these concerns could have been overcome.
10. The appellant also suggests that the density of the development would be less than other sites on the street. Whilst no substantive evidence has been provided showing comparable plot sizes, it is the specific characteristics of the plot and the way this would influence the layout of 2 dwellings which would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the area. The limited amount of third-party support does not overcome this harm.
11. I note the evidence submitted in respect of drainage and highway matters. The Council did not refuse the development on such grounds. Whilst it is possible these matters could be appropriately addressed; this would not override the harm identified under the main issue. I have therefore not considered these matters in any greater detail.
12. The appeal site is currently relatively open with a palisade fence to the boundary allowing for some visibility between the site and the footpath. Domestic planting or boundary treatments would be unlikely to facilitate views between the site and the footpath at ground floor level. Therefore, I am not persuaded that natural surveillance of the footpath would be improved nor that

any such benefit would outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

13. For the above reasons the appeal is dismissed.

M Russell

INSPECTOR