



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 January 2020

by S A Schinaia MSc EngD FGS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18th March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/F2605/W/19/3239761
52 Hargham Road, Attleborough NR17 2ES

- 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 L Gray against the decision of Breckland District Council.
 - The application Ref 3PL/2019/0764/F, dated 25 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 6 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing garage and erection of new bungalow.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. Since the decision to refuse planning permission was made, the Breckland District Council has adopted the Breckland Local Plan (November 2019) (BLP), superseding relevant policies within the Breckland Core Strategy and Development Control Policies (2009).
3. The new policies relevant to this appeal are COM01 and COM03 which supersede DC16 and DC1 of the Core Strategy, respectively, GEN03 which defines the settlement hierarchy, and HOU06 on new housing. Policy COM01 (e) requires that new developments respond appropriately to the existing layout of buildings, street scenes, open spaces and pattern of development. Policy COM03 requires new developments to consider the protection of amenities of existing dwellings and neighbouring occupants and provide for adequate space of usable and secluded private amenity space of the occupiers of proposed dwellings, in keeping with the character of the surrounding areas.
4. With the adoption of the new local plan, the Council issued a new five-year housing land supply. I am satisfied that the Council is able to demonstrate a deliverable five-year housing land supply of 6 years. In respect of the Government's Housing Delivery Test Measurement, the evidence indicates that Breckland has achieved 119% delivery. For the above reasons, paragraph 11d of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) is not engaged.

Main issue

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

Reasons

6. The site is a plot of land adjacent to Fairfield Drive, Attleborough, to the rear of 52 Hargham Road. The proposed development is for the demolition of a garage and erection of a single storey dwelling. The appeal site used to form the garden of the dwelling at 52 Hargham Road. During the visit, the site seemed separated from the dwelling by a wooden fence and was covered with rubble and demolition waste.
7. The appeal site lies within Attleborough's Settlement Boundary as defined by Policy GEN03 of the recently adopted BLP. According to the text supporting Policy HOU06, housing development in the location should be favoured because the site has good access to services and facilities. The same policy recognises the importance of the design and character of housing for the community and states that higher density should be fully assessed in terms of their impacts on the design, character and sustainability of the locality.
8. The area is characterised by bungalows with sizeable plots in Fairfield Drive and the adjacent Hargham Road. Whilst the properties in Fairfield Drive and Beech Avenue are smaller, the front and back gardens are nevertheless spacious. The appeal site falls within a large plot: it is a large back garden. The proposed layout, including parking spaces, would occupy a large part (about two thirds) of the available space, leaving almost no or limited space within the north and south boundaries, thereby resulting in a cramped form of development which would be at odds with the layout and density of the surrounding area.
9. Consequently, the development would result in an unacceptable reduction of outside amenity space for the occupiers of 52 Hargham Road. Furthermore, the proposal would result in a material loss of open space separating dwellings in Fairfield Drive and the resulting higher density would be out of character with the existing development pattern of the area. The loss of outside amenity space and the cramped conditions of the two dwellings would not be justified by the provision of one dwelling to housing supply in what is a relatively sustainable location.
10. The appellant argues that the development would mirror the layout of the property at 2a Fairfield Drive opposite the appeal site. However, such property lies within a plot that is approximately double that of the appeal plot. Therefore, the appeal development and the development at a Fairfield Drive are not directly comparable. The appellant mentions developments in Dodds Road falling within plots of a size similar to the appeal development. That may be the case, but I have considered this proposal on its individual planning merits and taking into account the character and appearance of the immediate area.
11. For the reasons outlined above, I conclude that the development would not accord with policies COM01, COM03 and HOU06 of the BLP. COM01 requires that new developments respond appropriately to, and are completely integrated with, the existing layout of buildings and patterns of development. The proposal would also be contrary to Paragraph 127 of the Framework in so far that it would result in a development that is not sympathetic to the local character of the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

Conclusion

12. For the above reasons, and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S A Schinaia

Inspector