
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 February 2020 by Hannah Ellison BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by Zoe Raygen Dip URP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/D0650/W/19/3241575

31 Marlborough Crescent, Widnes, Halton WA8 9EJ

- 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 John Jackson against the decision of Halton Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00300/OUT, dated 21 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 25 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is outline permission for 4 No. single storey bungalows with all matters reserved.
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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. The application was made in outline with all matters reserved for consideration at a later stage. I have had regard to the submitted plan, which provides an indication of how the amount of development proposed could be achieved. However, I have dealt with the appeal on the basis that the plan is for indicative purposes only and whilst it has informed my decision, it has not in itself been determinative.
4. Notwithstanding the description of development set out in the banner heading above, which is taken from the application form, I note that an amended plan was submitted to the Council during its processing of the application which resulted in a change to the development being applied for. A more accurate description is that provided in the decision notice as 'outline application, with all matters reserved, for demolition of existing bungalow and development comprising 3 no single storey bungalows'. The Council dealt with the proposal on this basis and so shall I.

Main Issue

5. The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. The appeal relates to a detached bungalow occupying a corner plot on Marlborough Crescent with Buckingham Avenue. The immediate area is characterised by detached bungalows set back from the road and within plots of generous widths creating an open and spacious character
7. This proposal seeks to demolish the existing dwelling and erect three detached bungalows. The site plan suggests this could be achieved by orientating the dwellings into the site with narrow building frontages along the highway. Whilst this is only an indicative layout, the scale of the proposed development would result in a significant subdivision of the site irrespective of the final layout or orientation of the properties.
8. The appeal site is of a generous size and is wider than adjacent plots due to its corner location. Nevertheless, the adjacent bungalows along Marlborough Crescent also have good spacing between side elevations and party boundaries. These features contribute positively to the character of the immediate area. However, the triangular layout of the appeal site, which narrows to the rear and along its Buckingham Avenue frontage, somewhat limits its overall size. Therefore, in order to achieve the proposed number of bungalows, this proposal would result in narrow dwellings which would occupy noticeably cramped plots, harmfully eroding the open and spacious character of the area. Thus, they would disrupt the established rhythm of the street scene and therefore fail to reflect the pattern of development in the locality.
9. Consequently, the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the wider area and would therefore be contrary to policies BE1 and BE2 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan (2005) and the Halton Borough Council Design of Residential Development, Supplementary Planning Document (2012) which collectively seek to ensure that developments respect local distinctiveness and the character of the surrounding area. It would also fail to accord with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to create places that are sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

10. There may be room for contractors parking and the hours of working could be strictly controlled by a planning condition. Furthermore, I do not doubt that the bungalows could be constructed to modern energy efficient standards. However, these matters would not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area that I have identified.

Conclusion and Recommendation

11. Therefore, for the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Hannah Ellison

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

Zoe Raygen

INSPECTOR