
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 February 2020

by Bhupinder Thandi BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P1805/W/19/3240083

1 Wood End Drive, Barnt Green B45 8JU

- 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 P Clark against the decision of Bromsgrove District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00401/FUL, dated 22 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 10 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is a detached dwelling and garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a two storey detached dwelling located within a large plot located on the corner of Plymouth Road and Wood End Drive. Wood End Drive has a very low density with notable separation between properties creating a spacious residential scene. The presence of mature landscaping and trees creates a verdant environment and reinforces this sense of spaciousness. Plymouth Road consists of detached properties built closer to one another and at a higher density.
4. The proposal involves the subdivision of the existing garden and the construction of a new dwelling fronting Wood End Drive. I acknowledge that the site is not located within an area of special control or protection and that the design proposed would respect local character. However, the proposed dwelling would result in an uncharacteristic concentration of built form along Wood End Drive that would fail to integrate with the established pattern of development in the cul de sac.
5. The proposal would reduce the size of the existing plot and result in two large properties within close proximity. The resultant plot sizes and close spatial relationship would appear unduly cramped and not typical of dwellings in Wood End Drive undermining its spacious and verdant character and appearance.

6. Whilst the proposal would make a more effective use of land this would be at the expense of a garden that makes a positive contribution to the spacious and verdant character and appearance of the area.
7. The appellant has made reference to a number of permissions for housing in the area which they contend are relevant to the appeal. In respect of the permission for 5 dwellings to the rear of No 9 – 11b Plymouth Road I acknowledge that they have been built in former back gardens, however, the development reflects the higher density of Plymouth Road where the closer spatial relationship between properties is materially different to the low density of Wood End Drive.
8. The permission at No 1 Plymouth Drive relates to a larger plot compared to the appeal site and maintains the spacious nature of Plymouth Drive. The permissions at No 18 and No 19 Plymouth Road relate to replacement dwellings and as such are not comparable to the appeal scheme before me. In any event the presence of the other developments in the area do not outweigh the harm that I have identified in relation to the impact upon the character and appearance of the area.
9. Consequently, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area contrary to Policies BDP7 and BDP19 of the Bromsgrove District Plan (2017) (BDP) which, amongst other things, requires the density of new housing to make the most efficient use of land whilst maintaining character and local distinctiveness, the protection of garden land unless development fully integrates into the residential area and is in keeping with the character and quality of the local environment. It would also run counter to the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).

Planning Balance

10. The Council accepts that they cannot demonstrate a deliverable five year supply of housing land as required by Paragraph 73 of the Framework. Consequently, Paragraph 11 of the Framework is engaged.
11. The construction of a new dwelling would make a small contribution towards the District's housing supply. The site is in a location that is within a reasonable distance of a range of day-to-day services. Future occupants would be able to reach these on foot, providing them with transport choice and not an over-reliance on a car. The proposal would help maintain services and facilities in Barnt Green. These are all factors weighing in the scheme's favour.
12. On the other hand, I have found that the proposal would adversely affect the character and appearance of the area. I give very significant weight to the proposal's conflict with the most important policies in the development plan. Therefore, the adverse effects of the proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits. Consequently, the presumption in favour of development does not apply and I have no reason to take a decision other than in accordance with the development plan.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above the appeal does not succeed.

B Thandi

INSPECTOR