



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 March 2020

by J Hunter BA (Hons) Msc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3rd April 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/H1515/W/19/3242972

3, The Cobbles, Brentwood, Essex CM15 8BP

- 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 I M Sinclair against the decision of Brentwood Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01397/FUL, dated 2 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 29 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as proposed detached house.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located at the end of a terrace of houses in 'The Cobbles;' a short cul-de-sac in a predominantly residential location. The street is essentially two terraces of modest two storey properties which sit perpendicular to each other at the head of the cul-de-sac. The terraces are very uniform in appearance, with strong building lines and have short front gardens or off-street parking areas fronting the street.
4. The wider area is characterised by larger, single and two storey properties of varied architectural styles set in spacious plots with wide frontages. The typically generous separation between buildings and significant tree cover gives the area a verdant, spacious character.
5. The appeal site sits on the western side of 'The Cobbles' opposite a school site. The street is relatively narrow and the appeal sites sits at the mouth of the cul-de-sac amongst dense foliage. From the information I have before me, I note that the parcel of land immediately to the south of the appeal site has planning consent for two houses, although I did not see any evidence that construction had commenced whilst on my site visit. Beyond this site there is an existing detached property with street frontage.
6. It is proposed to construct a detached dwelling on the wedge shaped parcel of land that remains between the development site to the south and the existing

end of terraced property no 3 'The Cobbles', which adjoins the northern boundary of the appeal site.

7. Given the diverse architectural styles of other dwellings to the south of the appeal site and in the wider surrounding area, the indicated materials and general appearance of the proposed development would not be unsympathetic in the wider context. Adequate separation would be maintained around the proposed dwelling, in keeping with the immediately adjacent properties and the size of the rear garden would also be comparable with those serving the existing properties in the street. There would be two parking spaces to the front of the property, albeit arranged at an oblique angle, which would be at odds with the other properties in the street. Nevertheless, in these regards the proposal meets the minimum requirements set out in the development plan and this is not disputed by the main parties.
8. I acknowledge that the appeal property has been designed to respond to the spatial constraints of the site and in particular the tapered shape of the plot. However, contrary to the appellant's assertion that the proposal would consolidate the built form, I consider that the proposed dwelling would appear awkwardly squeezed into a space that currently contributes to the open character of the street scene. Whilst I accept that the proposal would sit side by side with other properties and would have frontage onto the street in a way that would reflect the character of the area, I do not accept that spatially, it would complement the existing built form.
9. The proposed dwelling would have a very narrow frontage, reflective of the spatial constraints of the site, particularly at the eastern boundary. Its principal entrance would be located on the side elevation and accessed down a very narrow footpath and very close to the gable of the neighbouring property whereas all other properties on the street have very open front aspects with principal entrances facing onto the street. Furthermore, the building would sit at an oblique angle to no. 3 The Cobbles and based on the information I have before me it would be set back from the building line of the new development to the south thus interrupting the rhythm of the street scene.
10. The combination of these features would result in a building that would appear contrived when viewed in the context of the wider street scene. This would be significantly at odds with the uniformity of scale and layout which exists between most buildings in the immediate street scene and prevailing sense of space that is characteristic of the area as a whole. Hence, the development would appear as an ungainly and incongruous feature, thereby causing significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. To that extent there would also be some visual harm which in response to the appellant's comment would give rise to some 'emotional discomfort.'
11. In conclusion on this main issue I find that the proposal would fail to integrate sympathetically with its surroundings and in doing so it would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Accordingly, it would conflict with saved Policy CP1 of the Brentwood Replacement Local Plan 2005 and paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which collectively, amongst other things, require that development is of a high standard of design that add to the overall quality of the area.

Conclusion

12. In light of the above reasons and taking into account all other matters raised the appeal should be dismissed.

J. Hunter

INSPECTOR