



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 June 2020

by B Davies MSc FGS CGeol

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 June 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5630/W/20/3246472

Land adjacent to 1 Wilson Road, Chessington, KT9 2HE

- 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. D Abbitt against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames.
 - The application Ref 19/01570/FUL, dated 12 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 22 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is erection of new 2-bedroom detached house (plus study) on land to the side of No 1. Wilson Road.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issues

2. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.
 - Whether the proposal would represent an appropriate form of development, having regard to local planning policy and housing need.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The plot currently hosts a garage, outbuildings, driveway and yard. It is situated in a large, inter-war housing estate, which in this locality comprises two-storey houses in terraces of four, many of which have been modified by side extensions of highly variable design. The plot is unusually wide and runs perpendicular to the rear of neighbouring gardens, which together create a large opening between the houses when viewed from the street.
4. Although the buildings have a tightly grained layout along the street, the estate was generally designed with space for a garage and side access at the end of each terrace, and this rhythm produces gaps at first floor level to create a more open environment. Two-storey side extensions were observed at the site visit to have frequently encroached into these gaps, but most still retain a substantial space at the first-floor level.

5. A gap of only 1 m would remain between the new house and No 1 Wilson Road, which would therefore appear cramped when compared with the prevailing pattern in the area. A large visual gap would remain on the northern side given the location of the plot at the rear of Compton Crescent gardens, but overall, I consider that the loss of openness would be harmful to the established character of the area.
6. There are several examples of plot sub-division locally, although not on Wilson Road itself. Those drawn to my attention by the appellant on Compton Crescent have been built in a different context to the host site, having generally been constructed on much larger plots and street corners. Although development in a divided plot may therefore not be harmful in principle, at this location it would appear cramped and would not respect the prevailing typology of this street.
7. I have noted that the development would replace the yard, garage and storage buildings, which the appellant describes as 'scruffy'. While there may be benefit to the appearance of the locality from improvement of this area, this would not outweigh the harm to character and appearance identified above.
8. The proposal would appear cramped and a plot sub-division development would not respect the prevailing pattern of development. It is therefore in conflict with Policies DM8 and DM10 of the Core Strategy of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (adopted April 2012), which together require that development enhances local character and that prevailing density and layout are respected.

Form of development

9. The Council state that the site and area are suited to a family dwelling house and I observed during the site visit that the area appeared to be characterised by family sized housing. Section 3.3 of The Residential Design SPD (July 2013), to which I give weight because it has been adopted and is directly referenced by Policy DM13 of the Core Strategy, recommends that in areas of predominantly family housing, additional residential accommodation should also be family housing. I have made some allowance for local housing typically having 2 bedrooms according to the appellant. However, based on the dimensions provided, the proposal is for 2 single bedrooms and it would therefore not provide a family dwelling. No information is before me to demonstrate that there would be a demand for this unusual type of housing locally.
10. There would be benefit from contribution to the national housing supply, but as this is only one dwelling and a local need for housing of this type has not been identified, this would be limited.
11. I therefore conclude that the proposal is not delivering housing of the most appropriate type or to fulfil local needs as required by Policy CS10 of the Core Strategy.

Other matters

12. I have noted reference in the appellant's Design and Access Statement to the site as 'brownfield' and that it is in the proposal's favour that garden space would not be lost. With reference to the definition in the National Planning

Policy Framework (2019) of 'Previously Developed Land', it does not appear to me that this plot would meet the definition.

Conclusion

13. For these reasons, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

B Davies

INSPECTOR