



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 June 2020 by S Watson BA(Hons) MSc

Decision by R C Kirby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

An Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3425/W/20/3245721

Egremont, Newport Road, Stafford ST16 1DH

- 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 N Thompson against the decision of Stafford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/31349/FUL, dated 15 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 17 December 2019.
 - The development is a proposed new dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was carried out by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the locality.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site is in the rear garden of a large detached dwelling, Egremont, which is within a row of properties on the north side of Newport Road. These are in a loose but recognisable line, set back from the road within spacious plots. Their long rear gardens separate them from the short row of dwellings served by Upmeadows Drive. These dwellings are detached 2 storey properties set behind modest front gardens and driveways.
5. The new dwelling would be sited close to the boundary with Upmeadows Drive and would appear cramped and prominent in the streetscape because of its scale, height and relationship to nearby development. It would not address this road, yet would be viewed within its context. I find that the proposal would result in an intrusive, alien form of development, along this attractive road. The presence of mature landscaping around the appeal site could not be relied on to soften the impact of the development; indeed, it appears that some of it may need to be removed to accommodate the new dwelling and that which may remain may well die because of the proximity of the proposal to it.

6. Although the garden serving the proposal would be smaller than nearby development in Newport Road, it would reflect the plot sizes of nearby development in Upmeadows Drive, within which it would be viewed. However, the proposal would be much closer to the dwellings on Newport Road than any of the existing development to the rear. Although this would not be readily legible from Newport Road, this would still harm the clear distinction and separation between the two parallel rows of development. The harm to the grain of development would be exacerbated by the resultant size of the garden serving Egremont which would be reduced to a size much smaller than is typical on Newport Road.
7. I find that the proposed solar tiles and other green principles that would be incorporated into the design would not address the harm that I have identified. The absence of harm to the living conditions of nearby occupiers carries only neutral weight as this is not a benefit brought about by the proposal.
8. I note that the appellant has referred to a pre-application proposal¹ for residential development which the Council found to be acceptable. However, as no details of this have been submitted, I do not know its relevance to this appeal. Nevertheless, pre-application advice cannot prejudice the Council in their assessment of a planning application, and as such this matter does not affect the determination of the proposal before me.
9. Although both parties agree that the principle of residential development in this area is acceptable, and while I also note that the provision of one dwelling would make a small contribution to the housing land supply, I find that these matters do not outweigh the harm that I have identified and the conflict with the development plan.
10. In conclusion I find that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. As such the proposal would conflict with Policy N1 parts (g) and (h) of the *Plan for Stafford Borough* which, amongst other things, requires development to be of a high quality, having regard to the local context and density. There are no material considerations which indicate that the appeal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan.

Recommendation

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

S Watson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

12. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and concur that the appeal should be dismissed.

RC Kirby

INSPECTOR

¹ 18/2979/PAA