
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 June 2020 by John Gunn DipTP Dip DBE MRTPI

Decision by Zoe Raygen Dip URP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/C3240/W/20/3249035

Land adjacent to 69 Springhill Crescent, Madeley, Telford, Shropshire TF7 4DF

- 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 Michael Marshall against the decision of Telford and Wrekin Council.
 - The application Ref TWC/2019/0589, dated 20 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 18 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is the change of use from open space/amenity land to private garden.
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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 Matter

3. Revised plans, reducing the area of the appeal site, were submitted during consideration of the planning application. The Council dealt with the application on the basis of the reduced area and so shall I.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed change of use from open space/amenity land to private garden on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site lies in a residential area characterised by short terraces of houses and semi-detached dwellings, set back from the highway with well defined 'building lines' to Springhill Crescent and Farm Close. The majority of the properties have small landscaped front gardens enclosed by low walls, fences or hedges.

6. The appeal site comprises a prominent area of open land on the corner of Springhill Crescent and Farm Close. It provides a visual break within the Crescent and makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of this otherwise largely built up area.
7. The enclosure of the site would reduce the amount of open space in the locality considerably diminishing its visual contribution to the local development pattern. Furthermore, a solid 1.2 m high timber fence would be visually dominant due to its height and extent, particularly given its position on a corner and the alignment of the Crescent. Moreover, it would have the potential to introduce a level of domestication to an area of land that is currently devoid of structures, significantly eroding the open characteristic of this prominent corner site.
8. It is acknowledged that the amount of land comprising the appeal site was reduced during the consideration of the planning application. Whilst this would mean that a modest area of open space, containing a tree, would be retained, the proposal would still enclose a significant area of open land to the detriment of the open character of the area. In addition, the appellant has said he would be willing to accept a condition enabling discussion to take place with regards to the scale and design of the boundary treatment. Even if I were to impose a condition regarding boundary treatment this would not address the loss of the open space and therefore would not make an otherwise unacceptable development acceptable.
9. The appellant wishes to utilise part of the appeal site for off-street parking. During my daytime site visit I was able to observe that there were low levels of vehicle movement along the Crescent. I also saw that some properties had off-street parking within their curtilage, and there were spaces available within dedicated on-street parking bays. It is acknowledged that this only represents a snapshot in time, and it is likely that parking demand would increase in the evening and at weekends when people return to their homes. However, I have no substantiated evidence that additional off-street parking is necessary. Therefore, this matter does not outweigh the harm identified above.
10. Given my findings above I conclude that the proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. This would conflict with Policy BE1i) of the Telford and Wrekin Local Plan 2011 - 2031, the Madeley Neighbourhood Development Plan - Made Version March 2015 and the National Planning Policy Framework which collectively support development which respects and responds positively to its context and enhances the quality of the local built and natural environment.

Conclusion and Recommendation

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

J Gunn

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