
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 July 2020 by C McDonagh BA (Hons), MA

by Susan Ashworth BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/X4725/W/20/3246583
35 Mount Crescent, Wakefield WF2 8QG

- 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 David Evans against the decision of City of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01693/FUL, dated 21 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 18 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is a detached bungalow.
-

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.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises the rear garden of a two-storey, semi-detached dwelling. The area is generally characterised by similar styles of housing on large plots, with generous setbacks from the crescent-shaped road and to the sides of one another. There are also large mature trees to the rear of the appeal property separating the site from a school, giving the area an open and spacious character.
5. The proposed development would see the sub-division of the substantial rear garden and the construction of a one-and-a-half storey, detached bungalow. The bungalow would be of a modest form and scale and would have design characteristics to reflect those of the properties nearby. Access to the property would be taken from the existing driveway of the host building which would be extended to the rear, with an existing garage to be removed.
6. The rear gardens in the vicinity of Mount Crescent are generally free from significant built development, aside from general domestic buildings such as garages and sheds. Whilst I note that adequate garden space would be

provided for both the existing and proposed dwellings, the proposed bungalow would introduce substantial built form to an area of private rear garden space which would be uncharacteristic with the established and dominant pattern of development in the locality and would erode the spaciousness of the area.

7. In addition, the required distance of the new access track to the rear would be out of keeping with the general appearance of domestic garages and short driveways of the area, which are located to the side or front of houses in the street. The lack of a frontage to Mount Crescent, which would be readily apparent in the street scene by the removal of the existing garage, would also be contrary to the established layout of development. Accordingly, the development would appear as a discordant feature in the street scene.
8. To conclude on this main issue, the proposed bungalow would cause harm to the character and appearance of the local area. The development would therefore be contrary to Policies CS1, CS10 and D9 of the Wakefield Metropolitan District Council Core Strategy. Collectively, these seek to ensure development protects and enhances local character and distinctiveness. The proposal would also be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework which encourages development which is sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

9. The appellant has drawn my attention to recommended separation distances advised within the Council's Residential Design Guide, although I have not been provided with a copy. Regardless, the Council have not taken issue with potential impacts upon living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties and as such, nor have I.
10. I acknowledge that there would be some benefit to providing a small increase and variation in the Council's housing stock, although there is no evidence before me that there is a lack of single plots locally. This benefit carries limited weight. I note that no objections were received during the planning process. However, this is a neutral matter rather than one which weighs in favour of the scheme.
11. I appreciate the desire of the appellant to downsize and I acknowledge the practical benefits of a single-storey dwelling in retirement. This is a personal benefit, which carries limited weight in favour of the proposal.
12. The benefits of the proposal, individually and cumulatively, carry limited weight and do not outweigh the harm I have identified to the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly they do not indicate that permission should be granted.

Recommendation

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

C McDonagh

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

S Ashworth

INSPECTOR