
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 July 2020

by K Ford MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31 July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/G2435/W/20/3249350

22 Whetton Road, Kegworth, Derby DE74 2EZ

- 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 A Ellis against the decision of North West Leicestershire District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00938/FUL, dated 9 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 8 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is erection of one detached 2 storey dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the description of the development as it appears in the Council's decision letter and the appeal form as this accurately describes the development proposed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises the garage and driveway of a 2 storey detached dwelling in a residential area where properties are set back from the road, separated from it by driveways and front gardens. Landscaping dominates the frontages of dwellings with parking generally in a tandem arrangement leading up to garages. This creates an open and verdant character with the sense of openness amplified by the separation of dwellings, particularly at first floor level. The extensions to properties in the vicinity do not alter this.
5. The scheme would replicate design elements of nearby dwellings, such as a gable roof. It would also incorporate complementary materials. However, the development would sit on an uncharacteristically narrow plot with limited separation between neighbouring dwellings. Given the 2 storey height of the proposal, the scheme would create a terracing effect, at odds with the more spacious separation of the existing dwellings. The development would result in a dwelling with a very cramped appearance, creating a discordant feature in the streetscene. This would be exacerbated by the limited landscaping which would sit behind hardstanding and car parking located to the front of the site.

The hardstanding and car parking would consequently dominate views when looking into the site, even if as suggested by the appellant there would be a 50/50 split between hard and soft landscaping in accordance with the Council's Good Design for North West Leicestershire Supplementary Planning Document.

6. Irrespective of the absence of a policy on separation distances between dwellings, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. The absence of a landscape designation does not make the poor development acceptable. The development would conflict with the part of Policy D1 of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan which supports development that is well designed and as a minimum offers a good standard of design. It would also conflict with the parts of paragraph 127 and 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework which says that new development should add to the overall quality of the area and be sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment and that permission should be refused for development of poor design.

Other Matters

7. The development would be an efficient use of land in an appropriate location for residential development. It would also make a positive contribution to the housing stock of the area, helping to meet housing need. However, the minimal contribution made by a single dwelling would be outweighed by the harm identified.
8. The appellant has referred to a fallback position of covering the large area to the front of the existing property with a permeable surface which they claim would have a more harmful impact than the proposal. I note that at the time of my site visit there was evidence that vegetation to the front of the dwelling has been removed. Whilst this is detrimental to the otherwise verdant character of the area, I am of the view that overall the impact of the fallback position would not be more harmful than the proposal before me.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons identified, and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

K Ford

INSPECTOR