



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 July 2020

by David Cross BA(Hons) PgDip(Dist) TechIOA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R4408/W/20/3251598

Land at 21 to 24 Wentworth View, Wombwell, Barnsley S73 0LA

- 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 Paul Smith against the decision of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2020/0012, dated 4 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is extension to existing building to create a third storey to allow the formation of 2 no. additional flats and alterations to access and parking provision.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the Council's decision notice. This description reflects amendments made to the proposal over the course of the planning application and I consider that this accurately describes the proposal which forms the basis of this appeal. This is also the description used in subsequent appeal documents.
3. The appellant has submitted an amended block plan¹ with the appeal showing the proposed parking layout and amenity area. I consider that these amendments are minor in nature and I am mindful that interested parties have been afforded adequate opportunity to comment on the appeal should they wish to do so. I therefore conclude that interested parties would not be prejudiced by my proceeding to determine this appeal on the basis of the amended details.

Main Issues

4. The main issues in this appeal are the effect of the proposal on:
 - Highway safety with particular regard to parking provision;
 - The character and appearance of the host building and the wider area; and
 - The living conditions of future residents with regards to amenity space.

¹ Appendix B: Revised Block Plan and Car Parking - Plan ref. Smith-P-BL5

Reasons

Highway Safety

5. The appeal site is located adjacent to a turning area at the head of a cul-de-sac. This area also includes access to a public footpath leading to nearby open space and I saw that this route was popular with walkers at the time of my site visit.
6. The amended block plan submitted by the appellant shows a number of off-street parking spaces, including in the rear garden and adjacent to the head of the cul-de-sac. However, I saw that the arrangement of the existing public highway and the space available for parking appeared to be more constrained than shown on the plans, including space for the manoeuvring of vehicles as well as the effect of planting and means of enclosure on access to vehicles and the opening of car doors. Restrictions of this nature may result in the projection of parked vehicles onto the carriageway or displacement of parking onto the turning head.
7. The site is in a particularly sensitive location next to a turning area at the head of a cul-de-sac. Any conflict between parked vehicles and the manoeuvring of utility and other vehicles could lead to awkward and convoluted vehicle movements detrimental to highway safety. This may also result in larger vehicles reversing along the full length of Wentworth View to depart the area. The access to the public footpath across the turning area and the potential for conflict between vehicles and pedestrians adds to my concerns on this matter.
8. The relationship between vehicles manoeuvring on the rear parking area and resident access to the amenity space should also be appropriately considered.
9. Whilst it may be possible to provide the required number of off-street parking spaces, details to enable a suitable assessment as to how this would relate to the movement of vehicles and pedestrians on the highway have not been provided, for example through the provision of a swept path analysis. Due to the potential effect on public safety and taking a precautionary approach, I do not consider that it would be appropriate to require these details by condition.
10. I conclude that it has not been demonstrated that the proposal would make suitable provision for car parking without harm to highway safety. The proposal would therefore not comply with the highway safety requirements of Policy T4 of the Barnsley Local Plan 2019 (the Local Plan).

Character and Appearance

11. The extant site includes a two storey building which broadly reflects the form and scale of the semi-detached houses along Wentworth View and the wider area. The addition of the third storey would increase the massing and scale of the building in a form which would contrast uncomfortably with the original building and the prevailing character of the area. Whilst the proposed window designs would reflect those of the host building, this would lead to an ungainly vertical emphasis which would add to the incongruous and overdominant appearance of the building.
12. The building is stepped back from nearby dwellings on Wentworth View and it is therefore not prominent in longer distance views along the streetscape. However, the extended building would be apparent as an obtrusive feature in

shorter distance views, including from the turning area at the head of the cul-de-sac, the route to the nearby public footpath and from nearby dwellings including those to the rear of the site. Although the site is located on the edge of a built up area and at the end of the streetscape, this would not overcome the harm arising from the inappropriate design of the proposal as it would be viewed within the context of the nearby 2-storey dwellings.

13. The streetscape slopes down towards the appeal site along Wentworth View with a resultant stepping down of the separate blocks of dwellings. Due to this arrangement, the appellant submits that the proposal would have a comparable height to nearby dwellings within the landscape. However, whilst that may be so, this would not mitigate for the incongruous vertical emphasis of the proposal and the 3-storey design. Also, the proposal would not reflect the stepped down arrangement of dwellings along Wentworth View and would therefore appear as a dominant feature at the end of the streetscape.
14. The Council refers to the potential for the proposal to create a precedent for the consideration of similar schemes. However, due to the location of the appeal site at the head of a cul-de-sac on the edge of the built up area I consider that its circumstances are so particular to this case as to not fetter the Council in future decisions in the wider area. That said, this does not lead me to a different conclusion in respect of the harm to character and appearance when the proposal is assessed on its own merits.
15. I conclude that the proposal would lead to significant harm to the character and appearance of the host building and the wider area due to its scale, design and location. The proposal would therefore conflict with the high quality design requirements of Policy D1 of the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) in respect of achieving well designed places. The proposal would also conflict with the advice of the SPD² with regards to high quality design which respects local character.

Living Conditions - Amenity Space

16. In its decision notice and officer's report, the Council considered that the proposal would not meet the external space standards expected of new residential development by the SPD. However, in its appeal statement the Council accepts that its original measurement was incorrect and that the proposal would only be slightly less than the minimum requirement.
17. In response, the appellant submits that the proposal would be slightly above the minimum requirement. The appellant also refers to the provision of footpaths around the property to separate vehicle and pedestrian movement for residents accessing the amenity area.
18. Despite the minor discrepancies between the Council's and appellant's calculations, based on the evidence before me, I conclude that the proposal would provide a suitable area of amenity space. The proposal would therefore not conflict with the advice of the SPD with regards to external space standards.

² Design of Housing Development Supplementary Planning Document 2019 (SPD)

Other Matters

19. I have had regard to the comments made locally in respect of the proposal, including matters of privacy and loss of light. However, they do not add to my reasons for dismissing this appeal.

Conclusion

20. Notwithstanding my conclusions with regards to living conditions, I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the development plan and the Framework as a whole in respect of high quality design and highway safety.
21. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Cross

INSPECTOR