
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 August 2020

by M Philpott BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21st August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/X3540/W/20/3249692

23 New Road, Trimley St Mary, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 0TF

- 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 C Andrews against the decision of East Suffolk Council.
 - The application Ref DC/19/3496/FUL, dated 4 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 11 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'proposed single storey dwelling (revised scheme)'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council has indicated that the development would have significant effects on European sites as designated by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The appellant made a payment to the Council prior to the start of the appeal which intends to mitigate the effects.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The site is located to the front and side of the dwelling at 23 New Road. At the time of my visit it primarily consisted of grass and bare ground partially enclosed by fencing that appeared to be part of the curtilage of No 23. A footpath runs alongside the site.
5. No 23 is one half of a semi-detached pair of properties that feature asymmetrical gable ends and front facing roof dormers. They are located within a row of semi-detached properties which are similar in scale and appearance and regularly spaced, despite having been extended and altered. On the other side of the footpath are bungalows which step back from the road in a regular pattern and also have a similar appearance. The surrounding area is characterised by comparable groups of properties arranged in a formal manner which provide it with a cohesive feel and create a sense of order and rhythm to the built form.
6. The proposed bungalow would be positioned close to No 23 and, by reason of its proximity and scale, would appear awkward and cramped. It would also

appear disconnected from the row of bungalows by the footpath. Although it would be located at the end of the row of semi-detached properties, it would nonetheless disrupt the rows' sense of order and rhythm and undermine the cohesive feel and group value of those properties. I find that the character and appearance of the area would be harmed as a result.

7. I note that the proposed bungalow would be similar in scale and appearance to the nearby bungalows. The size of the resulting plot and the extent to which the bungalow would extend across it would also be reflective of those properties. In addition, I consider that the areas of hardstanding proposed to the front of the bungalow and No 23 would not be uncharacteristic of the area. However, these matters do not address the harm I have identified.
8. The Council refused the planning application as it found that the proposal would be contrary to Policy DM7 of the Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (LP). I conclude that the proposal conflicts with this policy, as it seeks to ensure that development relates well to the character of its surroundings.

Other Matters

9. The appellant contends that the site would make effective use of the land; however, given my conclusions in respect of the main issue I do not find that this would be the case. It is also suggested that the bungalow would be a low cost home for purchasers; however, I have not been provided with firm evidence to support this claim or a mechanism to secure the bungalow as affordable housing.
10. The proposal would contribute to the supply of housing in the area in an accessible location within walking distance of services, facilities, bus stops and a train station. In addition, the local economy would benefit from the construction of the property and the occupiers spending on goods and services. However, I do not find that these matters outweigh the harm I have identified.
11. If I were minded to grant planning permission, I would need to be satisfied that the proposal would not adversely affect the integrity of any European sites. In doing so, I would need to consider whether the payment made by the appellant would secure the specific mitigation of any effects in this instance. I would need to consider this matter in the context of LP Policy DM27, which seeks to protect such sites. However, as I am dismissing the appeal for other reasons, I do not need to reach a finding on this matter.

Conclusion

12. For the above reasons the appeal is dismissed.

Mark Philpott

INSPECTOR