



## Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 27 October 2020

**by R Hitchcock BSc DipCD MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 30 October 2020**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/R1845/W/20/3256806**

**Land at 2 Trimpley Drive, Kidderminster, DY11 5LB**

- 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 Chris Sadler against the decision of Wyre Forest District Council.
  - The application Ref 20/0062/FUL, dated 17 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 24 June 2020.
  - The development proposed is a new dwelling with associated access & landscaping.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Preliminary Matters

2. Just prior to the Council's decision, the appellant provided a report on tree constraints, impacts and protection measures associated with the proposed development. Since the issue of the decision, the Council have considered the content of the report and has withdrawn its third reason for refusal in relation to trees. Having visited the site and considered the report I concur with the Council's view; accordingly, the matter falls away.
3. Within the parties' submissions reference is made to a draft version of the Worcestershire County Council Streetscape Design Guide which may seek to restrict the formation of new access points in close proximity to road junctions. However, that document has not been adopted and it therefore attracts no weight in my consideration of this appeal.

### Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the development on:
  - highway safety with particular regard to the proposed locations for parking and the standard of parking provision; and,
  - the character and appearance of the locality.

### Reasons

#### *Highway safety*

5. In the absence of manoeuvring space within the proposed subdivided plots of 2 Trimpley Drive, drivers using any of the proposed four parking spaces to the

frontages of the existing and proposed dwellings would need to reverse into or out of the parking spaces. This would be in a manner consistent with the existing houses on the road. However, the additional points of access would be in close proximity to the junction with Habberley Road, a busy road linking the B4190 and A4535, and an arm of the Trimpley Drive circular estate road which emerges opposite the site.

6. Drivers leaving or reversing into the sites would be required to monitor vehicles potentially approaching from four directions in addition to pavement user traffic. Views to traffic in the carriageways to the northwest and northeast would generally be available to drivers emerging from the sites. Views of traffic approaching from the south-east and turning into Trimpley Drive, however, would be much less visible. Although improvements could be made to enhance sightlines to traffic approaching the junction and turning right from Habberley Road though a reduction in the height and length of existing boundary fencing, the position and manoeuvring requirement associated with the new parking areas would give potential for hesitation and impeding traffic from freely manoeuvring about the nearby junctions.
7. In the event that the nearest parking space to the junction was in use, particularly by taller vehicles, sightlines from the consecutive row of spaces to right turning vehicles on Habberley Road would be substantially obscured. Whilst turning and emerging traffic speeds would be low, the potential for causing hesitation and/or interference with manoeuvring would be increased as a consequence of the use of the parking spaces.
8. Moreover, vehicles approaching the parking spaces from the southeast along Habberley Road would be required to make a double right turn immediately after the junction such that signalling of manoeuvres would be less clear to following drivers. In instances when occupants of the dwellings were unable to turn in to the sites due to vehicles approaching along the main run of Trimpley Road or already queuing at the junction, there would be additional potential for following vehicles to wait within the main carriageway or be prevented from completing the turn into Trimpley Drive. Vehicles unable to clear the junction would cause heightened potential for conflicts with an attendant reduction to road safety in the vicinity.
9. I acknowledge that the recent accident record for the locality shows no personal injury incidents, however, this is without the presence of the three additional access points and a parking space in closer proximity to the junction. I also note the advice in the Highway Code recommending reversing into driveways, however, given the proximity to the corner and numerous directions for potential approaching traffic, I do not find this a convincing argument or one that could be secured to make the proposed access points acceptable in planning terms.
10. The scheme shows four parking spaces to serve the proposed and existing dwellings. This provision would be consistent with the minimum number and size as suggested in the Worcestershire County Council's Streetscape Design Guide. However, for new residential development, large spaces are sought to facilitate accessibility to parked vehicles. This has not been demonstrated within the proposals. As such, if residents with reduced mobility resided in the property, the effect would be to limit the available parking to one accessible space causing a shortfall in parking provision at the site.

11. In the event that parking was displaced to on-street provision, then the practicalities of remote parking are such that additional parking pressure in the vicinity of the junctions would be likely. This would further frustrate their safe use. I therefore find that the proposed vehicle parking arrangements for the new unit would fail to deliver the adopted standard for accessible spaces.
12. For the above reasons, I conclude that the close proximity of the proposed parking spaces to the road junctions and limited size of the spaces serving the new development would increase the potential for road user conflicts and provide a substandard design for accessible parking. It would therefore fail to meet the requirements of Policies SAL.CC1 and SAL.CC2 of the Wyre Forest District Council Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (2013) (LP) as they seek to protect existing levels of highway safety, ensure adequate visibility about access points and provide accessible parking spaces.

#### *Character and appearance*

13. The site is a corner plot which lies in a residential estate of modern two-storey dwellings set behind open front garden areas. The houses on Trimpey Drive display common design characteristics and finishes set about a planned road layout. Although some dwellings have seen alterations, the consistency of design and limited palette of materials contribute positively to the sense of place.
14. The proposed plot size would be commensurate with others in the locality on account of the additional space provided to No2 to create a buffer to the Habberley Road frontage. This would provide for a dwelling on a consistent building line and with a private rear garden commensurate with others in the locality.
15. The design of the dwelling incorporates similar width and depth proportions to the existing dwellings in the row and wider estate. The window openings also reflect the proportions and layout of the neighbouring buildings. The proposed eaves line would sit higher than No2 consistent with the stepping of consecutive buildings along this part of Trimpey Drive, reflecting the change in ground levels. However, the incorporation of a low-pitched roof would fail to reflect the consistency of roof pitches across the estate and prominent views of the building at the end of the row would highlight this difference. The design would result in a contrived low ridge height that would contrast sharply with the consistent design of housing on the estate.
16. There is greater variation in the design of buildings along Habberley Road where individually styled properties are present in a range of plot sizes. Although the proposal would make use of a wide corner plot, it would present a large blank gable to the Habberley Road frontage which is characterised by buildings set well back from the roadway to create a sense of spaciousness. The building would be imposing in the Habberley Road frontage and appear at odds with its prevailing character. Whilst this would be tempered by the presence of a roadside tree, it would, nevertheless, detract from the streetscape, particularly during months when the tree was not in leaf. Moreover, the necessity to retain a high screen to provide privacy and the provision of little landscaping visible from outside the site, would fail to maximise its contribution to the adjacent streetscenes.

17. For those reasons, I find that the proposal would fail to reflect the consistent character of development on the Trimpey Drive estate or that of development on Habberley Road. It would therefore conflict with Policy CP11 of the Wyre Forest District Council Core Strategy (2010) and Policy SAL.UP7 of the LP as they require development to secure sensitive design which contributes and responds to the local character and distinctiveness of development and integrates with existing streetscenes.

### **Other Matters**

18. In support of the appeal the appellant highlights a number of other cases relating to development allowed on infill plots. Whilst some similarities can be drawn with respect to parking provision in those instances, none have similar circumstances in relation to the proposal's positioning in relation to the highway network. Accordingly, they provide little weight in favour of the proposed development, a case I have considered on its own merits.
19. I recognise that the proposal would contribute to family housing supply in a sustainable location and result in economic and social benefits during its construction and use. However, the contribution to housing supply from a single dwelling in the face of a large projected shortfall for the wider Birmingham area would be a limited benefit in the context of the Council's healthy housing land supply. It therefore attracts limited weight in the overall planning balance and this matter does not alter or outweigh my conclusions on the main issues.
20. I have noted the objection from a local resident. However, in the light of my findings on the main issues of the appeal, my decision does not turn on this matter.

### **Conclusion**

21. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*R Hitchcock*

INSPECTOR