



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 November 2020

by Bhupinder Thandi BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/J3720/W/20/3256982

Land adjacent to Oakfield, Miller's Close, Welford on Avon, Warwickshire CV37 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 Stephen Wreford against the decision of Stratford on Avon District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00354/FUL, dated 31 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 26 June 2020.
 - The development proposed is construction of 2no. new link detached dwellings with associated landscaping.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the area including the effect of the proposal upon the setting of the Welford-on-Avon Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site comprises an overgrown parcel of land located between a row of bungalows and a dwelling that fronts Duck Lane. Beyond the site is open countryside that extends to the River Avon. Located opposite is linear residential development that extends along Miller's Close in the form of semi-detached dwellings with noticeable gaps between them. These gaps together with the generous set back of houses from the roadside and grass verges gives the road a distinctly rural character and feel. The site neighbours but sits outside the boundary of the CA.
4. I acknowledge that the proposed development would take inspiration from the semi-detached properties opposite, that the materials would reflect local vernacular and the set-back would relate to the pattern of development in the area. However, the form and scale of the dwellings in terms of the overall height and large footprint would result in a prominent and dominant form of development. Notwithstanding the proposed soft landscaping along the frontage this sense of obtrusion would be compounded by the form and size of

- the car port and the extensive hard surfaced frontage resulting in an unduly urban and incongruous feature harming the rural character of the road.
5. Whilst the garden size would meet guidance set out in the Development Requirements Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The garden depth and its shape, the new built form and hard surfaced frontage would lead to an overdeveloped and cramped appearance compared to the surrounding area. The shape of the gardens resulting from the large footprint of the dwellings would not reflect local character. As such, the proposed development would not be in keeping with the pattern and character of development in the area.
 6. A Hawthorn tree would be removed. The appellant's Tree Survey indicates that it is semi mature and whilst in a fair condition it is not a notable specimen. As such, I find that the removal of the tree would not be harmful to the appearance of the area.
 7. I appreciate that the appellant has attempted to overcome the concerns previously raised but the amendments still result in a proposal that harms the character and appearance of the area.
 8. I conclude that the proposed development would adversely affect the character and appearance of the area contrary to Policies CS.5, CS.9 and AS.10 of the Stratford-upon-Avon Core Strategy (2016) (CS) which, amongst other things, requires development to have regard to local characteristics and historic character of the District's diverse landscapes; development to be sensitive to the setting and existing built form of the site and locality and to minimise the impact on the character of the local landscape. It would also be contrary to Part O of the SPD which, amongst other things, encourages on plot parking to be placed to the side of dwellings.
 9. It would be contrary to Policies HLU1, HLU2 and HLU6 of the Welford-on-Avon Neighbourhood Development Plan (2017) (NP) which, amongst other things, require new development to adopt high levels of design quality and be of a similar density and scale to buildings in the immediate neighbourhood.

The effect on the setting of the conservation area

10. The Welford-on-Avon Conservation Area Study sets out that Welford on Avon is a scattered settlement that sits within a loop of the River Avon. From the evidence before me including my observations on site the CA is characterised by a historic road layout with clusters of historic buildings scattered throughout the village. The spacing around buildings contribute to its rural and agrarian character. More modern housing developments including Miller Close border the CA and are at variance to much of the CA being more uniform in layout and form.
11. The extent of the setting of heritage assets is not fixed and may change and be experienced differently as the asset and its surroundings evolve. I acknowledge that the site is open, but it is well contained by existing built form and by landscaping, notwithstanding trees have been removed. The site does not contribute to the wider rural landscape and views of the proposed development from within the CA, including from the junction with Duck Lane, would be glimpsed, screened by the position of buildings and landscaping. As such, it would not be unduly prominent when viewed from within the CA. Whilst I have found that the proposed development would result in harm to the character

and appearance of the area, this would be localised and would not unacceptably affect the setting of the CA which is already influenced by built form.

12. I conclude that the proposed development would not affect the setting of the CA. Consequently, it would accord with Policy CS.8 of the CS which, amongst other things, seeks to protect and enhance the district's historic environment. It would also accord with Policy HE4 of the NP which, amongst other things, requires new development adjacent to the CA to conserve or enhance it.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above the appeal does not succeed.

B Thandi

INSPECTOR