



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 November 2020

by Diane Cragg DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/J4423/W/20/3258399
499 Loxley Road, Sheffield S6 6RP

- 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 Arron Marshall against the decision of Sheffield City Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00500/FUL, dated 11 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 22 May 2020.
 - The development proposed is demolition of one dwelling and erection of two new detached properties.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the development on
 - the character and appearance of the area; and,
 - the living conditions of future occupiers of the dwellings with regard to the provision of external amenity space.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is part of a ribbon of development on the south side of Loxley Road. It comprises a detached stone-built house sited with its gable elevation towards the road and main front elevation facing a garden area and driveway to the side of the property in a plot that slopes steeply down from the road frontage. A plaque on the front of the building dates the property to 1885.
4. To the west of the appeal site is the Old Loxley Post Office, a substantial stone-built property sited on the back edge of the footpath with retail shop on the ground floor. To the east is a row of three stone-built terrace properties. The existing dwelling at the appeal site, together with the adjacent properties, the terraced and detached stone buildings across the road to the north and most of the ribbon development, as it extends eastwards along the road frontage to the south side, are an attractive group of buildings.
5. The buildings have some unifying features including stone walling, slate roofs and substantial chimneys, largely vertically proportioned windows and boundary walls and railings. The properties either side of the appeal site have stone gable walls to their side elevations that are prominent features within the

street scene. There is also variety in the street with a range of dwelling types, differing spaces between the buildings and variety in the siting of buildings in relation to the street frontage. A combination of the unity and variety of the dwellings is an important attribute of the street scene.

6. From the road there are views and glimpses through plots on the south side of Loxley Road towards Loxley Valley. These views and glimpses of greenery and trees provide an attractive setting for the buildings and add to the character and appearance of the street.
7. The Council confirms that the existing dwelling is not covered by any designation and there would be no policy objection to its removal. I see no reason to disagree with the Council on this matter.
8. The proposed dwellings would be sited adjacent to the east and west boundaries separated by a central space which would provide car parking for both properties. The siting of plot 2 close to, and slightly forward of, the terraced dwellings would mask the attractive stone side gable of the row of terraces, reduce the space around the terrace and limit views through the site. The siting of plot 1 adjacent to the side boundary would narrow the space between buildings and reduce the existing views through the site on the appeal site's western side.
9. I appreciate that the siting of the development is below street level, however, the quality of the space provided between the two plots would be affected by the proposed raised parking area and the means of enclosure proposed to the rear of the parking spaces. Consequently, the important views and glimpses of Loxley Valley currently provided across the appeal site would not be adequately compensated for by the appeal scheme and the proposal would detract from the character and appearance of the street.
10. The two replacement dwellings are designed with two storey gable elevations facing the road. I have taken into account that the materials and some details of the proposed dwellings would reflect those of adjacent properties. I have also considered the siting of the existing dwelling which presents a gable elevation to the road frontage, however, the use of gables for pairs of windows as a main elevation creates an uncomfortable duality either side of the gable axis which is not traditional, and the design of the front elevation would appear unattractive in the street scene.
11. Further, the proposed deep plan form results in excessive roof windows and long flank walls facing each other across the proposed driveway. The flank elevations would have limited window openings and would create an unattractive space between the buildings which would be visible from the street. In addition, because of the site levels and the orientation of the roof, the roof windows would be prominent. The number of roof windows would not sit comfortably with the simple slate roofs typical on adjacent sites and would appear as a discordant feature within the street scene.
12. I accept that the density of the proposed development would not be excessive in relation to the adjacent development and that the appellant has undertaken a number of amendments to the appeal scheme, however, the design and siting of the proposed dwellings would not be sympathetic to their surroundings, would appear incongruous in the street scene and detract from the views through the site to Loxley Valley.

13. Therefore, the development would detract from the character and appearance of the area and would conflict with Policies BE5 a), and H14 a) & c) of the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan March 1998 (UDP) and Policy CS74 a), b) & d) of the Sheffield Development Framework Core Strategy (Core Strategy), March 2009 which collectively seek to ensure that the scale, form, architectural style and character of buildings should be in scale and character with neighbouring buildings. It would also conflict with the Loxley Valley Design Statement Planning Guidelines 2.1 (a) and 2.2 (a) where it seeks to ensure the design and scale of buildings is consistent with neighbouring buildings and important views towards Loxley Valley are retained. Further, the proposals would conflict with paragraphs 8c, 122d, 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) where it seeks to ensure development is sympathetic to local character and history.

Living conditions future occupiers

14. I saw during my site visit that the properties adjacent to the site have varying garden sizes and a number have raised balconies. Like the adjacent sites, the slope of the appeal site and the shape of the rear boundary affect the way the proposed dwellings address the rear garden. Nevertheless, the outside space appears to be a usable area providing opportunity for play and for sitting out.
15. The amount of outside space is above the minimum standards set out in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document Designing House Extensions (SPD). Although the development does not relate to an extension, I have not been provided with any evidence that the Council require a higher standard for new dwellings or that there are other reasons to apply a higher standard in this case.
16. In respect of the living conditions of future occupiers with regard to the provision of external amenity space the development would accord with Policies BE5 a), and H14 a) & c) of the UDP where these policies seek to ensure that the design of development should meet the needs of its users.

Other Matters

17. During the consideration of the previous scheme¹ the Council indicated that it did not have a 5-year housing land supply. The Council now indicates that it currently has a 5.1 years housing land supply. The appellant does not dispute that the Council can demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing land and there is no evidence before me that would lead me to disagree.
18. Local residents, Councillors and an MP have also expressed a wide range of concerns including, but not limited to the following; loss of privacy, highway and pedestrian safety, the sustainability of demolishing the existing dwelling, on street parking problems and loss of habitat for bats. However, I note that these matters were considered, where relevant, by the Council at the application stage and did not form part of the reason for refusal, which I have dealt with in the assessment above. Whilst I can understand the concerns of residents, Councillors and the MP, there is no compelling evidence before me that would lead me to come to a different conclusion to the Council on these matters.

¹ 18/02477/FUL

Conclusion

19. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

Diane Cragg

INSPECTOR