
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 January 2021

by **John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/D0515/W/20/3258824

Stanley House, 3c Bridge Lane, Wimblington, Cambridgeshire PE15 0RR

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Alan Clark against the decision of Fenland District Council.
 - The application Ref F/YR20/0024/0, dated 16 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as 'outline planning permission for a single 2 storey dwelling.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a rectangular parcel of land between dwellings that face south towards Bridge Lane which itself is a narrow single track road between March Road and the A141. The south side of the lane is undeveloped opposite the appeal site. Dwellings are a mix of shapes, designs and sizes, with the older ones evidently single storey. Plot sizes also vary but on the whole buildings are spaced out, reflecting the semi rural character of the immediate area.
4. Infill plots in and around No 3 Bridge Lane have had an eroding effect on the generally spacious feel to the street scene. No 3c in particular has been built very close to No 3. It is also of substantial scale in itself. To some extent however, these factors have had a visual effect on the appeal site, making what is clearly a very narrow plot already seem even more so.
5. The appeal scheme seeks outline planning permission with all matters (including those concerning the siting and design of the dwelling) reserved for future consideration. However, and with the above in mind, erecting a dwelling on the appeal site would appear as if it has been shoehorned into an available space, greatly increasing the density in the street scene and making it appear over crowded, emphasising an adverse effect that has clearly begun to reveal itself through the aforementioned infill plots. These effects would be

exacerbated by how far forward in its plot No 3c sits and the substantial frontage outbuilding to Thornbury House.

6. The proposed development would therefore cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to Policies LP12 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014. Amongst other things, these policies seek to ensure that development makes a positive contribution to local distinctiveness and, more generally, that it does not harm the character and appearance of the area.

Other Matters

7. The appellant states that the new dwelling would contribute to housing supply. Whilst this would add to choice and mix locally I have no detailed evidence before me pertaining to the Council's supply of housing sites and thus could ascribe no more than a minimal amount of weight to the provision of housing. Bearing in mind also that if I were to consider the appeal scheme in light of an undersupply of sites, the benefits thereof would be inherently limited by the scale of the proposed development. Accordingly attracting only limited weight against the harm that I have found, to which I would attach substantial weight given it would be obvious and long lasting.
8. I see that some environmentally sensitive measures could be built into the dwelling's design and this would be positive. Albeit precisely what this would be is conjecture at this stage with no sufficient mechanism before me to ensure any measures would come forward. Ultimately, the appeal scheme is in outline form and lacks the detail of a full plans submission which may have added detail in this regard. In any case, I do not feel low carbon measures incorporated into the design of any dwelling would be sufficient to outweigh the harm it would cause in regard to the main issue of the case.

Conclusion

9. I have had regard to the other matters that have been raised by third parties, but it is for the reasons I have explained above that the appeal is dismissed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR