



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 8 March 2021

by R Walmsley BSc, MSc, MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 April 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/U4610/W/20/3264780

5 Butchers Lane, Allesley Village, Coventry, CV5 9GW

- 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 Jeffrey John Donely against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref FUL/2020/1970, dated 20 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 21 October 2020.
 - The development proposed is alterations to fenestration and internal alterations (retrospective) and change of use of north wing from an ancillary residential annexe to a separate dwellinghouse (for renting out under the same ownership).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. This is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is within a well-established residential area. Within the immediate vicinity of the site there are large houses that occupy equally large plots. This gives the area a relaxed and spacious character. The appeal site is secluded which reduces its effect on the appearance of the area. Nevertheless, the detached nature of the property and its spacious plot contributes positively to the character of the area described.
4. The two-bedroom property would increase the density of occupation of the site which would increase the level of activity generated by people and vehicles. Whilst it is intended for the dwelling to remain in the same ownership as the main house, the activity associated with it would be independent of the main property; occupiers of the two dwellinghouses are likely to have different lifestyles resulting in movements at different times of the day and night in comparison with a single family dwellinghouse. There is also the likelihood of the site requiring additional refuse facilities and putting additional stress on local infrastructure.
5. The newly created dwelling would not have the same large garden that is typical of the area. This wouldn't be visible on the ground given that the garden would be out of public view. However, it would introduce a new and discordant form of development which would be harmful to local character.

6. Concerns were not raised by the Council regarding the changes proposed to the physical appearance of the building and there is nothing within the evidence before me to suggest that I should take a different view. However, the impact of a development on the character and appearance of an area goes beyond physical perception. I have found that there would be a material change in the use of the land which would be harmful for the reasons identified.
7. There are similarly smaller properties in the local area. However, I am not aware that the site context to these properties is similar to the appeal site and therefore fair and reasonable comparisons cannot be made between the two. Notwithstanding these comparisons, each case must be decided on its own merits, according to the facts and circumstances pertaining to that case, and it is on this basis that I have decided the appeal.
8. The development would contribute to local housing supply and provide a more affordable choice of housing within an accessible location. However, there is nothing within the evidence before me which suggests that there is a pressing need for smaller units of accommodation within the vicinity of the appeal site. Together with the proposal providing one unit of accommodation, the benefit of the development to local housing supply is limited and does not outweigh the harm identified.
9. The Council does not object to the overall quality of the dwellinghouse, to parking provision or to living standards, all of which are important planning objectives. However, these circumstances do not outweigh the harm identified.
10. All in all, I find that the development would be harmful to local character and therefore contrary to policy DE1 and, by association, policy H3 of the Local Plan (2017) which, amongst other things, seek development that respects and enhances the character of an area.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the development would be harmful to the character of the area and therefore contrary to the development plan when taken as a whole. There are no material considerations to suggest a decision other than in accordance with the development plan and therefore the appeal is dismissed.

R Walmsley

INSPECTOR