



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 June 2021

by Graeme Robbie BA(Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/W4705/W/21/3268104
87 Cleasby Road, Menston, Ilkley LS29 6HW

- 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 Justin Knowland against the decision of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00379/FUL, dated 27 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 2 October 2020.
 - The development proposed is a 3 bed detached house.
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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 surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a two-storey semi-detached house with attached single storey garage on a sloping, wedge-shaped site. With a wide road frontage to Cleasby Road, the property has garden to the side and rear, where the site tapers and slopes downwards towards a point. The site's long southern boundary abuts a rear access lane at the rear of a short terrace of properties known as Beech Grove and bungalows fronting on to Bingley Road.
4. There is an eclectic mix of architectural styles and building scales along Cleasby Road and the short stretch of Bingley Road¹ that the site adjoins. The side garden at No. 87 currently provides a useful visual break at the end of Cleasby Road, clearly separating properties here with those fronting Bingley Road. The domestic planting, boundary hedge and trees and shrubs within the site's interior also provide a pleasant balance to the mature, verdant sylvan setting and surrounds of the entrance to Red House Gardens.
5. There has clearly been an attempt to design the proposed dwelling so as to fit the awkwardly shaped site and respond to its constraints. Thus, whilst the proposed dwelling would be sited in a manner so as to be broadly consistent with the prevailing building line along Cleasby Road, it would feature an awkward chamfered rear corner to account for the tapering nature of the site. So too, the ground floor bay and pitched roof canopy, which would reflect similar features at No. 87 and neighbouring pairs of semi-detached properties. However, the proposed dwelling's half-dormer windows at the front are not

¹ Including Beech Grove

common features within the street despite its eclectic mix of styles, whilst its lower ground floor level and limited overall height would render it neither comparable with the scale and form of neighbouring houses, but still sufficiently large to clearly not be a domestic outbuilding and be an incongruous and jarring presence within this visual break.

6. However, in so doing, and notwithstanding the mixed style of properties elsewhere nearby, the result is nevertheless an incongruously scaled dwelling at odds with the character and scale of those around it. Furthermore, the proposed dwelling's proximity to both the existing attached garage at No. 87 and the boundary vegetation of the tapering southern boundary, adds to the dwelling's cramped appearance and would erode the visual break and sylvan setting at this part of Cleasby Road.
7. With regard to the proposed dwelling's cramped appearance, this would stem largely from the appeal site's irregular and awkward shape. There would be only a minimal gap between No. 87's attached garage and the proposed dwelling's flank elevation, adding to the sense of sideways extension from the hipped roof flank of No. 87, whilst the wide frontage and tapering side boundary are such that despite the narrow gap and retention of the existing hedge, the dwelling would appear very close to the site's southern boundary. Whilst the appellant refers to the proposal's design allowing for 'breathing space' between No. 87 and the rears of properties on Beech Grove, the development of the appeal site would, for the reasons I have outlined above, significantly erode the breathing space that the site's wide garden frontage currently provides. The provision of two off-street parking spaces towards the front corner of the site would also further add to the cramped nature of the proposed dwelling, adding further weight to my conclusions regarding the siting and layout of the proposed development.
8. Bradford Core Strategy (BCS) policy DS1 sets out the Council's broad approach to achieving good design and high-quality places. Although the proposal displays elements of having sought to follow this approach it would, for reasons I have outlined above, fail to respond to the positive patterns of development which contribute to the area's character and would be inappropriate to the site's context in terms of layout and scale. As such, the proposal is contrary to BCS policies DS3 and DS1 and the National Planning Policy Framework's (the Framework) aims for achieving well-designed places which include ensuring that developments add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive and well-designed through, amongst other things, layout, and are sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

9. The Council do not dispute the appellant's statement that the current housing land supply falls well below a five-year supply level, or the appellant's conclusions regarding Framework paragraph 11. The Framework also sets out the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes.
10. The proposal would contribute a further dwelling towards the Council's housing land supply, albeit that in the context of the uncontested substantial shortfall identified, a single additional dwelling would have only a very modest impact on addressing the Council's low level of housing land supply. I have also noted that the appeal site is well-located for access to services, facilities and

transport options and the economic and social benefits that would arise from the occupation of the dwelling and use of these nearby facilities and services.

11. The appellant has referred to an appeal decision² where the delivery of a single dwelling in the face of a housing land supply well below 5 years was noted by the Inspector and the appeal allowed. I do not have the full details of that proposal before me, but it is clear from that decision that that appeal scheme did not fall on the main issues identified by the Inspector in that instance. That is not the case in the instance before me, where I have found harm in relation to the proposal's impact on character and appearance. Whilst these factors weigh in support of the proposal, and the provision of an additional dwelling would, as the appellant notes, make a positive contribution, the impact of a single additional dwelling would be limited and the weight that I give to the decision referred to is limited as a consequence. These would, however, be clearly and significantly outweighed by the harm to character and appearance I have identified.
12. I am aware that the appellant entered into pre-application discussions with the Council and that the scheme was, as a consequence, amended in seeking to address those comments. The advice provided by a Council in a pre-application enquiry response is given without prejudice and is not binding and, whilst the outcome of the application will clearly be disappointing to the appellant, particularly having entered into pre-application discussions, my conclusions in respect of the main issue are set out above.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out, and having considered all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Graeme Robbie

INSPECTOR

² APP/A4710/W/18/3214566