



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 August 2021

by B Davies MSc FGS CGeol

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/C1625/W/21/3272604

17 Cotswold Gardens, Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire, GL12 7HW

- 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 and Mrs J Stanulewicz against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref S.20/2699/FUL, dated 6 December 2020, was refused by notice dated 25 February 2021.
 - The development proposed is a one bed dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site is on a large housing estate located close to the centre of Wotton-under-Edge town centre. It comprises the rear part of the garden of semi-detached 17 Cotswold Gardens, which is surrounded by similar properties. The garden opens onto the road running through the estate, from which it can be easily accessed.
4. The gardens on this side of the road create a sense of openness in an otherwise generally built up frontage on this part of the estate, which is a positive characteristic of the area. Development of a 2-storey house in a location central to these gardens would harmfully erode the sense of spaciousness.
5. The houses in the immediate area are generally set in long, modestly sized gardens, which are an attractive characteristic of the locality. In significantly truncating the garden, the proposal would create two small plots that would be harmfully atypical of the prevailing pattern, causing development in the area to appear cramped.
6. There are at least 2 single storey garages along a similar building line to that shown in the plans. However, these are notably lower than the proposed building in height and ancillary in nature, and for these reasons, the

development would not integrate with the garages on either side nor would they create any precedent for a 2-storey dwelling.

7. There would be contribution to the housing supply from windfall development in an accessible location, and to the local economy from the construction and occupation of the house. However, given that this is a single dwelling, these benefits would be modest and would not outweigh the harm to character and appearance of the area identified above.
8. The site is part of a garden in a built-up area and does not therefore meet the definition of previously developed land in the glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021). For this reason, I do not attribute significant weight to the fact that it is 'developed land'.
9. I acknowledge that adequate services are available, that there would be no detriment to the living conditions of neighbours and also that there is no dispute regarding the finish of the property. However, to my mind, these are matters of neutral weight in the planning balance.
10. The appellant has drawn my attention to a nearby appeal¹ that was allowed in 2005. From the limited information provided, this was for change of use of an existing building to a dwelling, rather than introduction of a new structure. For this reason, I do not find it comparable. Furthermore, the adequacy of living conditions is not a point of contention between the parties in this appeal and the earlier decision is therefore of limited relevance.
11. The proposal is therefore of inappropriate scale and density at this location, leading to a harmful loss of openness, a cramped appearance and an erosion of the prevailing grain of development. It would therefore conflict with Policies HC1, CP8 and CP14 of the Stroud District Local Plan (November 2015), which together seek to protect the character and appearance of the area.
12. I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the local development plan when read as a whole, and there are no other considerations that would lead me to determine other than in accordance with this. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

B Davies

INSPECTOR

¹ S.04/1261/COU, Land opposite 26 Court Meadow, Wotton-under-Edge, 4 April 2005