
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 August 2021

by C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 September 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/T2215/W/20/3258194

45 Farnol Road, Dartford DA1 5NG

- 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 & Mrs Choudhury against the decision of Dartford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref DA/20/00394/FUL, dated 27 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 5 June 2020.
 - The development proposed is for a two-storey, two-bedroom dwelling, with associated landscaping, bicycle storage and boundary treatments.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Government published a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) on 20 July 2021. Whilst I have had regard to the revisions, planning decisions must still be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the issues most relevant to the appeal remain unaffected by the changes to the Framework. I am therefore satisfied that there is no requirement to seek further submissions on the revised Framework, and that no party would be disadvantaged by such a course of action.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on (a) the character and appearance of the area; and (b) the provision of parking.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site relates to a two-storey, end-terrace property on Farnol Road. The site is prominently located, being bordered to the west by a public footpath that permeates the local estate. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in nature.
 5. The proposal would result in the construction of an attached dwelling. Whilst the scheme would have a similar height and depth to the host building, the development would be significantly narrower in width than the other properties within the terrace.
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6. I consider that the development would therefore fail to visually connect with the overall appearance of the host dwelling and the rest of the terrace. It would appear incongruous within the context of the local streetscene, which would be exacerbated by virtue of its prominent positioning.
7. In order to provide private amenity space for the original house and the new unit the existing rear garden area would be subdivided. There is already a significant level of mutual overlooking between residences in the locale, and therefore the relationship between the new garden and the block of flats to the west would not be appreciable. However, the irregular shape of the proposed site would be very limited and out of character with the surrounding area. Overall, to my mind the narrow scale of the house and the contrived rear garden shape would result in a cramped form of development.
8. I conclude that the proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would fail to accord with policies CS1 and CS10 of the Dartford Core Strategy September 2011, policies DP6, DP7 and DP8 of the Dartford Development Policies Plan July 2017 (DPP), and the Housing Windfall Supplementary Planning Document October 2014. Collectively these policies seek to secure new development of acceptable scale and appearance. It would also be inconsistent with the advice in the Framework which states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

Parking provision

9. The appeal proposal would not provide any off-street parking spaces for the units. I observed during my site visit that the area is a dense residential environment with high levels of on-street parking. Nevertheless, at the time of my visit at Thursday lunchtime, many on-street parking spaces were available close to the appeal site. Whilst I accept this is only a snap shot in time, it is an indication that on-street parking is not difficult to achieve at certain times of day. I also note that there are no restrictions by way of permits, time limits or a pay and display regime.
10. Based upon the evidence before me and my observations, I do not consider that the area suffers from undue parking stress and the scheme would be acceptable in this respect. There is sufficient on-street parking capacity to accommodate the demand arising from the development, without significantly worsening the existing parking situation close to the site and in surrounding streets.
11. I therefore conclude that there would be no undue detriment with regard to parking provision. It would meet policies DP3, DP4 and DP5 of the DPP in respect of traffic generation and environmental protection. The proposal is also consistent with the advice the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to ensure that development does not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

Other Matters

12. I acknowledge those matters that have been advanced in support of the development, including that the proposal would represent additional, well-insulated, wheelchair-friendly housing in an accessible location, and there are no objections with regard to the layout of the internal accommodation or the living conditions of the occupants of surrounding properties. However, these

arguments do not outweigh the harm to character and appearance that I have identified above.

13. I note the appellants' contention that an extension could be constructed to enlarge the existing dwelling. Whilst this may be the case, I have not been provided with any details of an approved scheme in this regard and such assertions therefore carry limited weight in my reasoning.

Conclusion

14. Having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Hall

INSPECTOR