
Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 23 August 2021

by Mr S Rennie BSc (Hons), BA (Hons), MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 October 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/U2235/W/19/3271432

50 Richmond Way, MAIDSTONE, ME15 6BW

- 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 Stephen Humphrey against the decision of Maidstone Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/503795/FULL, dated 24 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 19 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of 1nr. single storey 2 bedroom dwelling on land adjacent of 50 Richmond Way (demolition of existing garage and erection of a single storey two bed dwelling).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The proposed bungalow would be to the side of No 50, on what is an area of garden and also the position of a short driveway and garage. The plot currently appears spacious, especially as it is adjacent to a small area of amenity grassland on the bend within this part of Richmond Way.
4. Richmond Way, like some of the surrounding streets in this residential area, is characterised by either bungalows or two storey dwellings, being either semi-detached or detached. Although there are generally two storey dwellings along this side of Richmond Road to which the site fronts, the proposal for a bungalow would not be out of keeping with the wider street scene.
5. This residential area is also characterised by corners and bends in the road which appear spacious and provide some relief from the built form of the dwellings. This can be a combination of grass verges and largely undeveloped private gardens. As described above, this is the case for the plot and its surroundings at No 50 and also for the house to the rear (No 48 Richmond Road).
6. However, the proposal for the dwelling, even with it being only single storey, would be larger and more prominent than the existing garage on site. The proposed bungalow would erode this positive spacious aspect by introducing the bungalow into a tight plot and built up close to the existing side boundary of the site on this prominent corner. The proposed dwelling would give the

appearance of a denser plot layout in this part of the street currently characterised by its spaciousness. With the resultant erosion of this positive characteristic at this prominent plot on the tight bend in the road, there would be harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal, therefore, does not appropriately reflect its context within the area.

7. My attention has been drawn to other new dwellings being built within the wider area, but my concerns with this proposal relates to the specifics and context of this site. Whilst I have taken the other examples into consideration and been around the area on my site visit, they do not change my view on this proposal with most being different to this scheme for various reasons.
8. I note the advice given by Council Officers, but this appeal decision is based on the plans and details before me. Previous comments from the Council prior to the determination of the planning application has not had a significant bearing on my decision.
9. Overall, due to the harm to the character and appearance of the area, the proposal is contrary to policies DM1, DM11 and DM12 of the adopted Local Plan (2017). These policies require development to respond positively to, and where possible enhance, the local character of the area; to resist development which would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area due to the increase in density; and does not compromise the distinctive character of the area in which it is situated due to the resultant density; amongst other things.

Planning Balance

10. The proposed dwelling would add to housing levels and choice for future potential occupiers in this area. It is also in an accessible location, close to shops and services for example. I note the lack of objection from certain neighbours and consultees, although this is a neutral factor in the planning balance. Overall, as this is for a single dwelling the benefits are only modest and do not outweigh the harm I have identified.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Mr S Rennie

INSPECTOR

