



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 October 2021

by Hannah Ellison BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/L3245/W/21/3277058

8 Crabtree Lane, Wem, Shrewsbury SY4 5AJ

- 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 S.R. & J.D. Moseley against the decision of Shropshire Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01281/FUL, dated 8 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 4 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of two bungalows, formation of access and parking.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area;
 - Whether the proposed development would provide satisfactory living conditions for future residents, with particular regard to internal living space;
 - The effect of the proposal on highway safety; and
 - The effect of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, with particular regard to noise and disturbance.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. 8 Crabtree Lane occupies a generous plot at the head of the cul-de-sac. It is surrounded by residential properties, with three other bungalows of modest form and appearance fronting Crabtree Lane. Although the adjacent bungalows are sited close to one another, they have good-sized rear gardens. Together with the substantial space around No 8 and the presence of adjacent gardens, the street scene has an open and spacious feel.
4. The proposed development would result in the sub-division of the appeal site and introduction of considerable built form to two corners. Proposed bungalow A (as identified on the submitted plans) would be readily apparent along Crabtree Lane and sited close to No 8. Similarly, proposed bungalow B would have a noticeable lack of space around it, due to its positioning close to No 8

and the dwelling currently under construction to the north of the appeal site. Due to these factors, the proposed development would erode the spacious characteristics of the site and locality and would be overly dominant to the site, resulting in a cramped appearance.

5. Accordingly, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area and thus would conflict with Policy CS6 of the Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy (March 2011) (the CS), Policy MD2 of the Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development Plan (December 2015) (the SAMDev) and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Collectively, these policies and guidance seek to ensure that new developments are appropriate to the form, layout and pattern of existing development and the local context, amongst other things.

Living Conditions of Future Occupiers

6. The Council has raised concern that the bedroom space of proposed bungalow A and its built in storage provision fails to comply with the Technical Housing Standards - nationally described space standard (March 2015). The Planning Practice Guidance advises that where a local planning authority wishes to require an internal space standard, they should only do so by reference in their Local Plan to the nationally described space standard. I have not been made aware of any development plan policy which references this standard.
7. Furthermore, no further details have been provided on the extent of any shortfall or exactly what this relates to. Even if the standards are a useful point of reference and I were to take them into consideration, given the lack of detail provided I am unable to ascertain the Council's concern on this matter. Nevertheless, based on the information before me, I consider that the proposed bedrooms could comfortably accommodate a double and single bed respectively. The double bedroom would be of a good width and could accommodate some storage and there would be further storage in a dedicated space elsewhere.
8. Therefore, the proposed development would provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers and thus would comply with Policy CS6 of the CS, Policy MD2 of the SAMDev and the Framework which seek to ensure that developments are of a high quality and provide an acceptable standard of accommodation.

Highway Safety

9. Proposed bungalow B would have one bedroom and has been designed to be single occupancy. Even if the bedroom could accommodate a double bed and two people, I consider that one parking space would be sufficient given the small size of the dwelling. There would be sufficient on-street parking along Crabtree Lane, away from the turning head of the cul-de-sac and existing driveways, to accommodate any visitors to this dwelling.
10. The layout of plot B and the orientation of the demarcated parking space would hinder the ability for a vehicle to turn within the site. However, the submitted plans indicate that most of the area in front of bungalow B would be hard surfaced therefore vehicles could park in a different alignment and could therefore turn more easily. Nevertheless, even if vehicles would have to either

reverse into or out of the driveway, although not an efficient arrangement, the highway is a short cul-de-sac with limited properties even taking into consideration the proposed development, thus traffic levels are likely to be low with vehicles travelling at slow speeds. I also note that existing properties have limited turning space within their driveways. Accordingly, the resultant manoeuvres that may be required would be similar to that which already occurs and would not be significantly hazardous to pedestrians or road users.

11. Consequently, the proposed development would not result in harm to highway safety and thus would not conflict with Policy CS6 of the CS, Policy MD2 of the SAMDev and the Framework which requires developments to have sufficient parking provision to ensure highway safety is not harmed.

Living Conditions of Neighbouring Occupiers

12. The proposed development would introduce two bungalows to this short cul-de-sac. Even along with the adjacent dwelling currently under construction, the total number of additional residents and their associated comings and goings would likely be low, given the small size of the proposed dwellings. The proposal would not therefore result in a substantial increase in noise or disturbance that would be unreasonable within this residential area.
13. Accordingly, the proposal would not harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers and would therefore adhere to Policy CS6 of the CS, Policy MD2 of the SAMDev and the Framework which seek to ensure developments respect the amenity of existing residents.

Other Matter

14. Although it appears that bungalow A was previously approved¹, I do not have the full details of that approval before me and, moreover, the appeal proposal is for an increased total amount of development thus I have determined it accordingly.

Conclusion

15. The proposal would provide two additional homes which would bring some accompanying benefits associated with the investment and employment during construction, and from the spending in the local area from future occupants. The nature of these social and economic benefits would however be limited due to the small scale of the development, thus I afford them limited weight.
16. Despite the acceptability of the proposal in terms of living conditions and highway safety, the development would harm the character and appearance of the area and would conflict with the development plan. I attach substantial weight to this matter therefore the benefits are insufficient to outweigh this harm. There are no material considerations, including the Framework, that indicate a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan, thus the appeal should be dismissed.

H Ellison
INSPECTOR

¹ Council application reference: 20/02221/FUL