



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 September 2021

by J Williamson BSc (Hons) MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/B3410/W/21/3276104

Oak Cottages, 12 Dovecliff Road, Rolleston-on-Dove DE13 9AU

- 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 Diana Lawrence against the decision of East Staffordshire Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P/2020/01007, dated 12 October 2020, was refused by notice dated 7 December 2020.
 - The development proposed is conversion from a single dwellinghouse to 3 separate one bed apartments.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for conversion from a single dwellinghouse to 3 separate one bed apartments, at Oak Cottages, 12 Dovecliff Road, Rolleston-on-Dove DE13 9AU, in accordance with the terms of the application, and the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: MC/20/000/C/001/Site Plan, 041 01, 031 01, 032 01.
 - 3) Prior to more than one flat being occupied at any one time, details of safe and secure cycle storage for a minimum of 3 bicycles shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be installed and made available for use prior to more than one flat being occupied at any one time, and the facility shall be retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development without impediment to its designated use.

Preliminary Matters

2. No description of development was provided on the planning application form and I have not been provided with any evidence that the main parties agreed to a description during the process. The appeal form states that the description has not changed, and proceeds to provide an extensive account which mainly includes information that does not describe development. However, within the lengthy description it is understood that the proposal relates to conversion from a single dwellinghouse to 3 separate one bed apartments. I consider this accurately describes the proposal. I have therefore used it in the header above and my decision is based on it.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

Reasons

4. The appeal site consists of a detached, two-storey dwellinghouse with accommodation in the roof, a small garden to the front and deep garden to the rear. The site is located within the countryside for planning policy purposes, within a ribbon of development located immediately east of the eastern boundary of the built-up area of the village of Rolleston-on-Dove.
5. The submitted plans show the existing dwellinghouse as having 5 No. bedrooms. There is no on-site parking at the site, and there are no adjacent streets or other areas within the vicinity of the site that could be used for off-site parking. Consequently, like the occupants of most of the properties within the ribbon, the occupiers of the appeal dwellinghouse rely on on-street parking located to the front of the property on Dovecliff Road. The stretch of Dovecliff Road in front of the ribbon of development has a 30 mph speed limit and has traffic calming measures installed, including humps to encourage slower speeds, reductions in road width towards each end of the ribbon of properties, and priority for vehicles travelling in a west to east direction.
6. The Council refer to car parking standards outlined in the Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document-September 2020, (SPD). My understanding of the standards provided in the table in paragraph 2.1 of the SPD differs a little to the figures referred to in the Council Officer's Report, (OR). Thus, the OR states that a 5 bed dwelling requires 4 off-road car parking spaces. However, the 'Class C3 (dwellings)' section of the table in 2.1 of the SPD states that a dwelling of 4 or more bedrooms requires 3 car parking spaces. I have made my decision taking account of both the details in the SPD and the suggestion in the OR that a 5 bed dwelling requires 4 off road car parking spaces.
7. I agree with the Council that, according to the guidance in the SPD, the proposal to convert the dwellinghouse to 3 one bed apartments would require 4 on-site car parking spaces, ie one for each apartment and one for visitors. I note that the Council considers that a proposed dining room on the ground floor could be converted to another bedroom. However, the description of proposed development states 3 one bedroom apartments, and I have made my decision on this basis.
8. Although the OR states that "*the most recent plans for the property indicate 4 bedrooms*", my understanding is that, according to the existing floor plans submitted, which I have taken as being the most recent plans and I have no substantive grounds to question their content, the existing dwelling has 5 bedrooms. Even if the dwelling only had 4 bedrooms, according to the guidance in the SPD the requirement is the same, ie 3 spaces for a dwelling with 4 or more bedrooms. I therefore consider, with reference to guidance in the SPD, that the proposal would generate the requirement of one additional car parking space over and above the number of spaces required for the existing dwellinghouse. I acknowledge, as do all parties, that demand for parking on the stretch of Dovecliff Road in front of the ribbon of properties, is high. Nevertheless, in my opinion, the requirement of one additional space

would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety, nor would it result in a severe impact on the surrounding highway network.¹

9. If I were to accept the Council's suggestion that a 5 bedroom dwelling generates a theoretical on-site car parking requirement of 4 spaces, then, as the plans show the property as having 5 bedrooms, the existing theoretical requirement for the property is 4 spaces. Consequently, the proposal would not generate the requirement for any more spaces over and above the existing requirement for the dwelling. In such an instance, my conclusion would also be that the proposal would therefore not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety, nor would it result in a severe impact on the surrounding highway network.
10. Furthermore, the Council accepts that the site is close to the settlement boundary of Rolleston-on-Dove. I acknowledge that the village does not have an extensive range of facilities and services. However, amongst those that it does have are a few shops, which future occupiers of the proposed apartments could use to acquire items needed for day-to-day use. During my site visit I estimated the site to be around a mile from these shops. I also note that they would be readily accessible by foot or bicycle. Additionally, more facilities are available at Stretton, which is only a little further from the site than the village of Rolleston-on-Dove. Furthermore, the Council point out that it is possible to get a bus from close to the site, all-be-it an hourly service, with connections to the neighbouring town of Burton, which has a full range of services and facilities. Hence, I consider the site provides opportunities to promote more sustainable modes of transport, which weighs in favour of the proposal.
11. Bearing the above in mind, I conclude that the proposal accords with policies SP1, SP8 and SP35 of the Local Plan:2012-2031 (2015), which require, collectively and among other things, development not to have an adverse impact on the highway network or cause highway safety issues, and to encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport. The proposal would also accord with paragraphs 110 (a) and 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework. I have taken account of the guidance in the SPD and conclude that, within the site-specific circumstances, the recommended requirement of either one or no additional car parking space(s) over and above the requirement for the existing dwelling would not undermine the guidance.

Other Matter

12. In addition to the above, I note that a concern has been raised regarding privacy in rear gardens. However, I consider the nature and extent of the proposal would not significantly alter the privacy levels enjoyed by occupiers of existing properties.

Conditions

13. I have taken account of the conditions suggested by the Council and the appellant's comments on them. I have attached a condition requiring the approved development to be begun within 3 years, to ensure the development is completed within a suitable timescale. I have attached a condition specifying the approved plans, for the avoidance of doubt. Given the limited extent of

¹ Paragraph 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which is a significant material consideration, advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highways if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

off-site parking within the vicinity of the site, and to promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport, I have attached a condition requiring the provision of a suitable cycle storage facility.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons outlined above, I conclude that the appeal is allowed.

J Williamson

INSPECTOR