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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 November 2021

**by D Hartley BA (Hons) MTP MBA MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 29<sup>TH</sup> November 2021**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/A0665/W/21/3281416**

**18 Crescent Drive, Helsby, Frodsham WA6 9QQ**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Paula Edwards against the decision of Cheshire West & Chester Council.
  - The application Ref 20/03044/OUT, dated 18 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 2 June 2021.
  - The development proposed is a new dwelling.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Procedural Matter

2. The application is submitted in outline with all detailed matters reserved. The submitted plans include details of the position of a dwelling on the site as well as a garden and parking area. Furthermore, the design and access statement submitted with the outline planning application states that '*a 2 storey dwelling is envisaged with ridge and eaves proportionate to the surrounding dwellings*'. I have taken these indicative details into account only in so far as establishing whether it would be possible, in principle, to erect the dwelling on the site.

### Main Issue

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

### Conclusion

4. Crescent Drive is an established residential street falling within the settlement of Helsby. The appeal site forms part of an undeveloped and landscaped side garden at No 18 Crescent Drive. It is in a part of the road where there is a greater sense of spaciousness and landscaping between and around the large, detached dwellings when compared to the denser pattern of development at the bottom of Crescent Drive. In the vicinity of the appeal site, and on the southern side of Crescent Drive, house plots are much wider and the two storey development is set well back from side boundaries. These attributes are appreciated by the passer-by as contributing positively and distinctively to the character and appearance of the immediate area.
5. In the context of the above, the appeal dwelling would be sited within a residential plot which would be much narrower than others in this part of the

street. In this regard, the proposal would detract significantly from the pattern of development which sweeps around this part of Crescent Drive.

6. I acknowledge that this is an outline application with all detailed matters reserved, but indicative details suggest that the dwelling would be two storey. Given the much narrower width of the plot, when compared to existing residential plots close-by, it is likely that the two storey dwelling would be positioned in very close proximity to both side boundaries. The effect of such likely positioning, as detailed on the indicative layout plan, would be a pattern of development which is materially at odds with the otherwise more generous spacing around other detached dwellings on this side of the road.
7. While access and car parking details are reserved for future consideration, the illustrative details suggest that this form of development would front Crescent Drive. Given the width of the proposed residential plot, I am concerned that unlike the neighbouring plots, where there are wide and green front gardens, the access and parking arrangements on this site would seek to emphasise a form of frontage development which appeared squeezed and hard and failing to assimilate well with the otherwise wider, open and green front gardens that are seen in respect of neighbouring dwellings.
8. I do not doubt that it would be possible, in principle, to ensure that materials, windows and roof height details matched those of neighbouring properties. However, good design encompasses more than that, and, for the reasons outlined above, I am not persuaded that it would be possible, in principle, to erect the proposed dwelling on the site without significant harm being caused to the prevailing character, appearance and pattern of development in the locality.
9. I therefore find that the proposal would not accord with the character, appearance and design requirements of Policy ENV6 of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies 2015, policies DM 3 and DM 19 of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies 2019, or with chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 which states, at paragraph 126, that *'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and helps make development acceptable to communities'*.

## **Other Matters**

10. The appellant has referred me to other dwellings that have been built and approved in Crescent Drive. As part of my site visit, I was able to consider the position of these dwellings which are not within the immediate vicinity of the appeal site. One new dwelling was in the process of being constructed lower down Crescent Drive. This did appear to be infill development, but it was in a part of the street where the pattern of development was tighter and in direct contrast to the upper part of Crescent Drive where there is greater space between and around buildings. Therefore, the existence of the other development referred to by the appellant does not alter my finding about the prevailing character and appearance of development within the vicinity of the appeal site.
11. Reference is also made by the appellant to the approval and erection of a dwelling in Bates Lane. I do not know the exact circumstances which led to this house being approved but, in any event, this property is in a different street

and so is not seen in the context of the appeal site. I have determined the appeal on its individual planning merits taking into account the effect of the development on the positive and distinctive characteristics of the immediate locality.

12. The proposal would have the effect of boosting the supply of houses in the area and there would be some economic benefits arising from construction employment and additional spending in the local economy. However, such benefits would be modest from one dwelling and would not be of sufficient magnitude or weight to alter or outweigh my conclusion on the main issue.

### **Conclusion**

13. I conclude that the development does not accord with the development plan for the area taken as a whole and there are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

*D Hartley*

INSPECTOR