



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 January 2022

by Helen Davies MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27th January 2022.

Appeal Ref: APP/Z4718/W/21/3281763

Land adj. 34 Cliff Road, Holmfirth HD9 1UY

- 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 Green End Construction against the decision of Kirklees Metropolitan Council.
 - The application Ref 2021/62/91373/W, dated 2 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 26 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of 2 detached dwellings.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a parcel of land to the east of Cliff Road, which slopes steeply upwards away from the road. The site consists mostly of rough grass with a few small trees and is bounded to the front and rear by drystone walls. Cliff Road is a ribbon of development on the outskirts of Holmfirth.
4. Due to the surrounding topography, dwellings on the west side of Cliff Road are below the level of the road, with dwellings on the east side being set above the level of the road and hence are highly prominent in the streetscene, as would be the case for the proposed dwellings. This section of Cliff Road features predominantly terraced dwellings of a traditional design, constructed in stone. There are also a number of detached dwellings in the area, including a three storey dwelling directly to the north of the site and a two storey dwelling to the south. In addition, there is a detached grade II listed building opposite the site, on the other side of the road, with the blank side elevation facing the road.
5. There is variety in the scale and layout of surrounding dwellings. Despite this, the character and appearance of the area is traditional and unified by the use of a common pallet of materials and a predominant pattern of design. Most dwellings feature simple flat front elevations, roof pitches sloping away from the road and windows of a modest scale. The surrounding fields and hillside setting give Cliff Road a semi-rural character.
6. The proposed dwellings would be constructed in stone, each with a three storey gabled projection to the front, occupying just under half the width of the

elevation. The window openings would be relatively large, including full height glass doors to a glass fronted balcony at both second and third floor.

7. The prominent projecting gable would be out of keeping with the prevailing pattern of simple roof forms and flat front elevations. The form and proportions of the openings, incorporating large areas of glazing, would appear modern and does not take cues from the surrounding dwellings. Taken together, these design elements would result in dwellings that would be quite suburban in their character and appearance, which would fail to complement the traditional and semi-rural built form which defines this section of Cliff Road. Consequently, despite the use of materials to reflect the surrounding dwellings, the proposed dwellings would not respect or enhance the predominant character and appearance of the surrounding area.
8. My attention has been drawn to examples of other new or extended dwellings along Cliff Road and I viewed the identified examples during my site visit. The scale, design and context of each is different so the examples are not directly comparable to the appeal site. Details of some of the examples have been provided for my consideration. 39 Cliff Road is to the west of the road, so is at a lower level, as well as being set well back from the road. The gable at No 39 is therefore much less prominent in the streetscene, and also incorporates a hipped roof form and traditional windows. The development at Willow Grove is, again, set down and away from the road so is not a major feature in the streetscene. The dwelling at 2a Cliff Road, whilst including a modest Juliette balcony, is a simple flat fronted design. The extension at New Leaf Cottage does add a front projection, but one of a simple design and modest height, which continues the established pitched roof form. The extension was also approved under a previous development plan. I acknowledge that the new dwelling at Wood Bungalow is a modern design which does not take cues from the surrounding dwellings. However, as set out in the officer report for that application, permission was granted in light of a viable and likely fall-back position, considered to amount to a very special circumstance which outweighed the development's harm. Consequently, direct parallels are not easily drawn between the examples and the appeal proposal, and in any event, each case must be considered on its own merits and impacts.
9. The Kirklees Housebuilder Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2021 (SPD) notes that 'contemporary designs and high-quality modern interpretations of distinctive local characteristics would be welcomed where they are demonstrably appropriate to the site context and make a positive contribution to the wider environment'. As set out above, that is not the case for the proposed design at this appeal site. I also note that the proposed large areas of glazing in the front elevation would allow future occupants to benefit from views and potential solar gain. However, these factors do not outweigh the harm I have identified.
10. I conclude that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, the development would not comply with Policy LP24 of the Kirklees Local Plan, or guidance set out in the SPD, which together, amongst other things, seek to ensure that proposals promote good design which relates well to neighbouring development. It would also fail to accord with the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

11. I note that 45 Cliff Road, opposite the site, is a Grade II Listed Building. I have had regard to my statutory duty under Section 66 of the Planning Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 and had special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting. Due to the orientation of the Listed Building and its location relative to the appeal site, the proposal would not cause harm to, and would therefore preserve, the setting of the listed building.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above and taking into account the development plan as a whole and all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Helen Davies

INSPECTOR