



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 February 2022

by Oliver Marigold BSc DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C1625/W/21/3284660

10 Elmgrove Road East, Hardwicke, Gloucester, GL2 4PY

- 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 Mrs Louise Neal against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref S.21/0991/OUT, dated 19 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 1 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as the 'erection of new 2 Bed Bungalow land to rear of 10 Elm Grove Road East'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of Elmgrove Road East.

Reasons

3. The appeal proposals are in outline but with scale and access falling for consideration now. It is proposed to erect a new single storey dwelling behind the existing property, in a tandem arrangement, with access to the side of the existing house.
4. Elmgrove Road East is primarily a residential area consisting mainly of two-storey detached and semi-detached properties, but there are exceptions such as the bungalow next to the site and the flats opposite. Houses locally have a variety of designs and setbacks, but most face the road.
5. Behind the property is the estate development of Hildyard Close, consisting of dwellings laid out in two cul-de-sacs, with staggered building lines. The pattern of Hildyard Close is more clustered than at Elmgrove Road East, but the dwellings nevertheless face the highway or private access roads off each cul-de-sac.
6. Therefore, while the area has a varied typography and urban grain, I find that a common feature is that dwellings front the road on which they sit. Although in outline, any new dwelling within the appeal site would inevitably be to the rear of the plot, behind the existing dwelling and facing its rear. As a result, it would not reflect the area's character and appearance.
7. The appellant considers that the development at The Grove (formerly 24 Elmgrove Road East) establishes the principle of dwellings positioned behind others. However, none of the properties has a tandem layout, where one

- directly faces the rear of another. Instead, the dwellings here front onto their own road, perpendicular to Elmgrove Road East. As such this development is not comparable to the appeal scheme.
8. My attention has also been drawn to Starting Gate, immediately opposite the appeal site. Permission was previously granted here for various backland proposals. These were not implemented and instead an apartment block was built, which maintains a linear pattern fronting the road, which again prevents useful comparison with the appeal proposals.
 9. While the proposed dwelling is shown to align roughly with those in Hildyard Close, it would face in the opposite direction to these properties. Furthermore, the long gardens either side of the site would separate it from existing housing. For these reasons, a dwelling here would appear harmfully out of place in the street scene.
 10. I recognise that only a single storey dwelling is proposed. I also accept that it would be seen against the backdrop of properties in Hildyard Close, and that views from Elmgrove Road East are currently restricted by the existing boundary treatment and garage block. However, as part of the proposal these would be removed, and an access created to the side, making the proposal's backland position more visible in the street scene.
 11. The appellant argues that a large-scale outbuilding could be erected under 'permitted development' rights with a similar impact, but I have been provided with no clear evidence that this represents a realistic fallback for the appellant should the appeal fail. Furthermore, any such incidental building, suggested to be a workshop or garden room, is unlikely to require its own vehicular access nor to generate the same domestic paraphernalia as a separate dwelling. Its appearance would be different, and I do not therefore consider that the potential fallback justifies the harm identified.
 12. I appreciate the benefits of the proposal which include the efficient use of land in an urban area and the addition of a small-scale dwelling to the housing supply, but these benefits would not outweigh the harm I have identified.
 13. I therefore conclude that the proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of Elmgrove Road East, contrary to adopted policy HC1 of the Stroud District Local Plan 2015, which states that proposed housing should be of a layout that is compatible with the character and appearance of the part of the settlement in which it would be located. Although not cited in the decision notice, for similar reasons it would also be contrary to policies HOU1 and HOU4 of the Hardwicke Neighbourhood Development Plan 2015-2031 which when read together state that the scale of infill development should be sympathetic to the neighbouring built form and the character and appearance of the street scene.
 14. Having regard to the development plan as a whole, and all other material considerations, the appeal is dismissed.

Oliver Marigold

INSPECTOR