



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 February 2022

by A Price BSc MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/W1525/D/21/3283407

Bechers, Watchouse Road, Galleywood, Chelmsford CM2 8NE

- 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 Mrs Michelle Lucas-Jones against the decision of Chelmsford City Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00843/FUL, dated 22 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 6 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as 'request for drop kerb for access to driveway'.
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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 surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is situated within a small development of properties forming Barn Mead. The appeal property fronts Watchouse Road and is set back from it behind a grass verge and front garden.
4. The layout of Barn Mead is such that it minimises the visual impact of parked cars, with no parking to the front of the appeal property or that adjacent. These properties instead benefit from off-street parking to the rear.
5. The grass verge at the front of the site forms a continuation of that to the north, which runs along Watchouse Road on the approach to Galleywood. In that respect the verge contributes significantly to the verdant nature of this part of Galleywood.
6. The provision of a dropped kerb at the appeal site is intended to provide access to a proposed driveway at the front of the property. This would result in the loss of a significant section of green verge along this part of Watchouse Road and the front garden of the appeal site. The proposed development, irrespective of the material used in its construction, would have an urbanising effect on this verdant part of the village, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
7. I note that during my site visit a vehicle was parked on the grass verge in front of the property. Whether or not that is a regular occurrence, it has no bearing

on my decision given that the proposal is for a permanent change to the front of the appeal site.

8. Consequently, I find that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would run contrary to the relevant provisions of policy DM23 of Chelmsford Local Plan (2020), which in summary seeks to achieve high-quality design in development that is compatible with the character and appearance of the area. This is consistent with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) in respect of good design.

Other Matters

9. I note the support the proposal has received from neighbours. I also note the appellant's acceptance of conditions to deal with surface materials and soft landscaping in the event that the appeal was to be allowed. However, these matters do not mitigate or overcome the harm I have identified above.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons above, having had regard to the development plan as a whole and to all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

A Price

INSPECTOR