



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 March 2022

by David Jones BSc (Hons) MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/A0665/W/21/3284195

27 Wallcroft, Willaston, Neston CH64 2UE

- 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 Mr & Mrs Wendy & Martin Edwards against the decision of Cheshire West and Chester Council.
 - The application Ref 20/02471/FUL, dated 14 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 7 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is a new two bedroom dormer bungalow in the side garden of 27 Wallcroft.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within a residential area and comprises of the curtilage of an existing property at 27 Wallcroft, a rendered semi-detached bungalow. The site forms a corner plot which is bounded by Wallcroft to the east and Smithy Lane to the north. Dwellings which occupy corner plot locations have generally retained their generous plot sizes and amenity spaces to the side, providing a spacious and open feel which contributes positively to the area. The appeal proposal seeks the erection of a rectangular shaped white rendered detached dormer bungalow to the side of the existing dwelling.
4. The development would be located in proximity to the site's northern boundary with Smithy Lane. Whilst the distance between the gable end of the proposed dwelling and the northern boundary would be comparable to distances which exist between other dwellings within Wallcroft, the development would result in much of the amenity space to the side of No 27 being lost thus eroding the spacious and open nature of the prominent corner plot.
5. Whilst the appeal site would be capable of accommodating a dwelling with sufficient amenity space and parking, the plot's lack of width combined with the short distance between the proposed dwelling and the boundary with Smithy Lane would result in the development appearing cramped and uncomfortable causing harm to the character and appearance of the area.
6. In addition to the above, the existing properties in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site are predominately semi-detached bungalows. Despite many of

these properties having been extended or altered they have largely retained a regular form and appearance as semi-detached properties. Furthermore, those properties which have seen the spacing to its boundary reduced are generally bound on both sides by neighbouring dwellings.

7. That said, I acknowledge that there are five detached bungalows on Intake Close situated to the north of the appeal site on the opposite side of Smithy Lane, together with other detached properties in the area including two recently built bungalows on the north side of Ashtree Croft. I am also aware that a third bungalow has permission but has yet to be built out.
8. However, by virtue of Smithy Lane itself and an existing boundary hedgerow which largely screens views of the detached bungalows from the appeal site, a physical and distinct separation exists between the two housing developments. As a result, I find that the proposed development would be viewed and read within the context of Wallcroft, and would have little relationship or connection to the properties on Intake Close.
9. Consequently, I consider that the proposed development would not represent a 'transitional' development between the two distinct housing developments. Instead, the detached bungalow would appear out of keeping with the prevailing form of development in this part of Wallcroft, causing harm to the character and appearance of the area.
10. That said, I am conscious of the recently built detached bungalows on Ashtree Croft. These properties are sited close together and are read in the streetscene as one larger block despite their detached nature.
11. Notwithstanding that, whilst the height, size and external appearance of the proposed dwelling would be in keeping with the existing properties on Wallcroft, its detached form would be at odds with the prevailing character principally as a result of the degree of separation from the existing property.
12. Finally, I have also had regard to the Council's concern over the limited space to the side of the properties which would also result in the front of the properties being dominated by parking. However, from my site visit I saw that the frontage of the appeal property is already dominated by parking and the appeal proposal would not unacceptably change this character. Furthermore, this is not significantly different to the detached bungalows on Ashtree Croft. With that in mind, I consider that this is not a determinative factor.
13. I therefore conclude that the development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area and would be in conflict with Policies ENV6 of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies and Policies DM3 and DM19 of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies which seek, amongst other matters, to ensure that developments respect the prevailing layout and urban grain and do not cause unacceptable harm to the character of the surrounding area. It would also be contrary to the overarching aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

14. I have also given careful consideration to the sustainability credentials of the proposed development, including the use of appropriate materials, energy efficiency, and its location in close proximity to various local services and

facilities. However, these benefits do not outweigh the harm I have identified that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

15. The proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations which would outweigh this finding. For the reasons given above the appeal is dismissed.

David Jones

INSPECTOR