



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 July 2022

by F Wilkinson BSc (Hons), MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/X4725/W/22/3296301

158 Smeaton Road, Upton, Pontefract WF9 1LQ

- 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 T Askew against the decision of Wakefield Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01173/FUL, dated 28 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 24 February 2022.
 - The development proposed is the erection of 1 no detached dwelling.
-

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 host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is the rear/side garden area of an end of terrace two storey red brick dwelling located on a corner plot between Smeaton Road and Sheepwalk Lane in a mainly residential area. The proposed development would comprise the construction of a new dwelling.
4. The host dwelling is typical of other properties in this residential area, the streetscape of which is characterised by modest two storey terraced dwellings with hipped roofs. The terraces are in evenly spaced and regular sized blocks, aligned in a similar manner fronting onto the highway and with similarly sized gardens. Given this consistency, the streetscape has a distinctive uniform appearance.
5. There are two detached dwellings to the east of Sheepwalk Lane, one of which is a bungalow with a steeply pitched gable roof and central chimney and the other is a two storey property with a single storey render side extension and a detached single storey garage. There is a further single storey property with a shallow gabled roof and a roller shutter door to the front elevation that lies in between these two dwellings. Although these properties are of a different scale and design to the majority of properties in the vicinity, this does not undermine the prevailing character and appearance of the streetscape in the vicinity of the site.
6. The proposal would comprise a single storey dwelling, with accommodation also provided in the roof, served by front and rear dormer windows and

rooflights. It would therefore be of a different scale and design to the majority of properties in the vicinity.

7. The appellant contends that the proposed dwelling would be viewed in the context of Sheepwalk Lane rather than as a continuation of Smeaton Road due to its location to the rear of the host dwelling and the proposed access point, which would be from the lane. There would be views of the proposed dwelling in conjunction with the properties on Sheepwalk Lane. However, it would also be seen collectively with the properties on Smeaton Road in many of these views, including when approaching along both the road and Sheepwalk Lane. The uniform character and appearance of the properties on Smeaton Road would be apparent in such views. The overriding context for the site is therefore provided by the properties on Smeaton Road rather than the properties on Sheepwalk Lane.
8. The appellant considers that the site could accommodate a larger dwelling than that proposed, and I note that part of the rationale for a single storey dwelling is to minimise the effects of developing a property in this location. In addition, the appellant considers that the design cues should be from other bungalow style properties found in the locality. However, as noted above, there is only one bungalow style dwelling within the immediate vicinity of the site and a very small number of single storey buildings.
9. The guidance in the Council's 2018 Residential Design Guide Part 1: Guidance for Housebuilders Supplementary Planning Document (the RDG) advises that backland development should reflect the positive characteristics of the area, which I appreciate does not necessarily mean a requirement to replicate what is there. However, the proposed dwelling, by virtue of its scale and design, would be an inharmonious form of development that would fail to reflect the prevailing, homogenous, character and appearance of the surrounding area.
10. Although the proposed dwelling would be a relatively modest property, it would have a considerably larger footprint than the host dwelling. While the appellant highlights that this is to be expected of a detached dwelling compared to a terraced one, it need not necessarily be the case. Notwithstanding the appellant's willingness to agree materials, which could incorporate those which reflect the host dwelling and properties in the surrounding area, the proposal would introduce a development of a scale that would be out of proportion with the host dwelling. It would therefore represent a discordant addition to the site, notwithstanding its setback position and lower ridge height.
11. The proposal would result in an incongruous form of development which would be at odds with the host dwelling and surrounding area. I therefore conclude that it would be significantly harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and area.
12. Accordingly, the proposed development would be contrary to Policy D9 (a) of the Local Development Framework Development Policies Document, adopted 2009, which requires, amongst other matters, that proposals respect, and where appropriate enhance, the character of the locality in terms of design, scale, massing, height, density, layout, materials and colour. It would also conflict with the design principles in the National Planning Policy Framework and the guidance in the RDG, the most relevant of which is summarised above.

Other Matters

13. I acknowledge that the Council considers the principle of residential development on the site to be acceptable, subject to satisfying other criteria, and that the proposal would add to the housing mix of the local area, and thus did not find it contrary to Policy CS6 of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy, adopted 2009. While this may be the case, it would not outweigh the harm caused to the character and appearance of the host dwelling or surrounding area.

Conclusion

14. The proposed development would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole as well as the Framework. There are no material considerations worthy of sufficient weight that would indicate a decision otherwise than in accordance with it. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

F Wilkinson

INSPECTOR