



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 August 2022

by J D Westbrook BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18th August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/V2635/W/22/3292991

69 St. Johns Road, Tilney St. Lawrence, KING'S LYNN, PE34 4QN

- 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 and Mrs D Claxton against the decision of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01344/F, dated 24 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 29 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a single dwelling.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed dwelling on the character and appearance of the area around St Johns Road and Westfields.

Reasons

3. No 69 is a semi-detached house situated on a corner plot at the junction of St Johns Road and Westfields. In common with other houses along this part of St Johns Road, it has a long rear garden. The proposed house would be constructed on the rear portion of the back garden of the property. It would be sited opposite to the entrance to Westfields Close.
4. Policy CS08 of the Council's Core Strategy (CS) indicates that new development will be required to be of high quality design and respond to the context and character of places by ensuring that the scale, density, and layout will enhance the quality of the environment. Policy DM15 of the Council's Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (DMP) indicates that development must protect and enhance the amenity of the wider environment. Proposals will be assessed against a number of factors including a requirement that the scale, massing, and layout of a development should respond sensitively and sympathetically to the local setting and pattern of adjacent streets including spaces between buildings through high quality design.
5. The Council contends that the proposed dwelling, by reason of its prominent position within the street scene, and between dwellings on St Johns Road and Westfields, would represent an incongruous addition and undesirable overdevelopment of the site. The proposed dwelling would compromise the

current verdant character of the immediate vicinity to the detriment of the character of the locality as a whole.

6. The appellants contend that the proposed dwelling would be in keeping with other similarly sized dwellings and their garden space in the area, including those adjacent and opposite, in terms of scale, height, massing and style. The dwelling would retain open space either side and to the frontage. In addition, the verdant character is largely due to a substantial Leylandii hedge along the side boundary of the appeal property, which could be removed at any time, while the remaining street scene is far from verdant, comprising fencing and a collection of outbuildings and caravan. Finally, they consider that the proposal complies with both national and local planning policy. The appellants also make note of other 'infill' developments in the vicinity of the appeal site.
7. The houses along this part of St Johns Road are characterised by spacious plots, with most houses being set well back from the road and having long rear gardens. The houses on Westfields to the rear have similarly spacious plots, such that there is considerable distance between the rows. This space between buildings is particularly evident when viewing from the entrance to Westfields Close, opposite the appeal site. There is also significant greenery in the general street scene and surrounding area, not only by virtue of the mature hedging along the current boundaries of No 69, but also beyond. I acknowledge the existence of outbuildings and other structures in the vicinity, but these do not result in subdivisions of the characteristic large plots.
8. The proposed dwelling would be sited on much of what is currently the rear garden of No 69, leaving both the existing house and the proposed dwelling with uncharacteristically small plots. In addition, the proposed house would be visually unsympathetic to the open nature of the area between the rows of houses on this length of St Johns Road and Westfields, acting as a visual block. It would be prominent and would appear out of context from this perspective.
9. I note the examples of infill housing identified by the appellants in the vicinity, but the context of these examples is different from that of the proposed development. The bungalow at the entrance to Westfields Close retains a small grassed area of land at the junction with Westfields, maintaining a sense of openness. Moreover, the character of Westfields Close, with bungalows on smaller plots, appears as something of an anomaly within the wider area and is, as a result, different from the prevailing character of the area on the opposite side of Westfields, which includes the appeal plot. Other examples mentioned by the appellants are either infill properties within an existing established frontage of houses, or are sub-divisions of unusually extensive plots at the end of a cul-de-sac, which are not prominent in the street scene.
10. In conclusion, I find that the proposed house would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area around this part of St Johns Road and Westfields, and would conflict with Policy CS08 of the CS and Policy DM15 of the DMP. Accordingly, I dismiss this appeal.

J D Westbrook

INSPECTOR