



## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 July 2022

**by K L Robbie BA (Hons) DipTP MTP MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 30 August 2022**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/N2345/W/22/3295843**

**Land at Banksfield Avenue, Preston PR2 3RN**

- 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 Shuraz Ahmed against the decision of Preston City Council.
  - The application Ref 06/2021/1525, dated 10 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 1 March 2022.
  - The development proposed is the erection of 1No. new dwelling following demolition of existing single storey garage.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Preliminary Matters

2. The address of the appeal site is described on the application form as Bankfield Avenue, whereas elsewhere it is referred to as Banksfield Avenue. I have amended the address in the banner to reflect the correct address of the site.

### Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

### Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises an area of garden to the side of 9 Banksfield Avenue (No.9) on the junction with Laurel Bank Road. The area is generally characterised by two-storey detached and semi-detached houses set back from the highway by short front gardens, amongst which are occasional bungalows. Properties have simple rectangular forms with space around them, the prevailing hipped roof forms adding to that sense of space. The area has a traditionally suburban feel to it.
5. The awkwardly shaped corner site has a wide frontage narrowing in width to the rear and is dog-legged around the rear corner of No.9. Laurel Bank Avenue rises from its junction with Banksfield Avenue. The proposal is for a detached house, which would be approximately 'Y' shaped with two stepped wings, which has attempted to respond to the different orientations and ridge heights of the bungalow at No.9 and the house at 1 Laurel Bank Avenue (No.1). In doing so, rather than acting as a transition between them, it would read as a contrived form of development which would be at odds with the general character and appearance of the simple forms of dwellings in the surrounding area.

6. The building would occupy the majority of the front portion of the plot. It would stand significantly forward of the strong building line formed by houses on Laurel Bank Avenue, such that when viewed from along that street it would be a dominant feature at the end of the avenue adding to its incongruous and cramped appearance on the junction. The narrow-gabled elevation closest to No.1 would appear awkward against the wider and higher frontage of that house. Furthermore, and irrespective of its detailing and modern design, the irregular arrangement of windows in the proposal would jar against the fenestration in surrounding houses.
7. In coming to this view, I have taken into account that the proposal would be built of materials similar to those found locally; other properties in the locality extend across much of their plots; that it is not necessarily possible to copy surrounding building forms given the constrained nature of the corner plot; and that the proposed ridge and eaves heights are no higher than those of the surrounding properties. I also acknowledge that design is a subjective matter and an innovative approach to design is encouraged in the National Planning Policy Framework (the 'Framework'). However, this should not be at the expense of development which relates well to its surroundings and reflects the character of the general area.
8. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of site and the surrounding area, contrary to the aims of Policy 17 of the Core Strategy<sup>1</sup> and criteria (a) of Policy AD1 and Policy EN9 of the Preston Local Plan<sup>2</sup> which, amongst other things, seek to ensure that new development is sensitive to the character and local distinctiveness of the area through high quality design which responds to its context. The proposal would also not comply with the design principles set out in the Central Lancashire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2012). Nor would it comply with the design aims of the Framework or the National Design Guide.

### **Other Matters**

9. A Permission in Principle (PIP) for a detached dwelling on the site was granted by the Council in 2020. Although this establishes the principle of new residential development on the site, it does not indicate that the proposed development is acceptable and does not persuade me otherwise the appeal proposal should be allowed.
10. The Council have not raised concerns regarding the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties or any future occupiers of the proposed dwelling. There are no listed buildings or other heritage assets close by which would be affected. The proposal would also provide additional housing within an existing residential area. However, given the scale of the scheme its contribution towards housing supply and mix would be limited and the weight this carries in support of the proposal is reduced as a consequence. The other factors are neutral in my assessment of the proposal and consequently neither they nor the proposals contribution towards housing supply outweigh the harm that I have identified on the main issue above.

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<sup>1</sup> Central Lancashire Local Development Framework Adopted Core Strategy (2012)

<sup>2</sup> Preston Local Plan Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-26 (adopted 2015)

## **Conclusion**

11. For the reasons given, I have found that the proposal conflicts with the development plan read as a whole. No material considerations have been shown to have sufficient weight to warrant a decision otherwise than in accordance with it.

*KL Robbie*

INSPECTOR