



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 August 2022

by Helen Davies MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd September 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C1625/W/22/3295864

26 Severn Road, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire GL10 2DL

- 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 Ms H Bridge against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref S.22/0030/FUL, dated 22 December 2021, was refused by notice dated 8 March 2022.
 - The development proposed is construction of a two storey dwelling on land adjacent to 26 Severn Road.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area;
 - Whether the proposed development would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants, with regard to private amenity space; and
 - Whether adequate arrangements would be made for drainage of the site.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. 26 Severn Road is a corner plot in a residential area, containing a semi-detached dwelling. It fronts onto an area of green space and has a private garden to the rear. Its main entrance is to the side, facing Severn Road, where there is parking and an area of garden.
4. Numbers 2 to 24 and 1 to 23 Severn Road are terraced dwellings with a strong and consistent building line, interrupted only by the occasional porch or modest single storey extension. Dwellings have good sized private rear gardens and are set back from the road by front gardens and parking areas with either no boundary or low walls and hedges. This gives the frontages a pleasant open and spacious character, which is added to by views down the road towards the area of green space.
5. The dwellings at each end of the terraces have two storey gables which project forward of the main building line. The projections are modest and still set well back from the road. They form clear and distinctive ends to the terraces.

6. The proposal would add a dwelling to the side of the existing dwelling at No 26, creating a short terrace at 90 degrees to the main terrace. It would extend the building line to close to the walkway, breaking the existing clear and consistent pattern of development. This would result in a dwelling that was overly prominent and incongruous within the streetscene. The proposal would also restrict views into and out of the green space making the area feel less open and spacious. In addition, it would unbalance the pair of semi-detached dwellings, which currently form one of four similar pairs which front onto the northern side of the green space and are highly visible. This detrimental visual impact could not be mitigated to an acceptable extent through landscaping.
7. Despite the appellant's statement that 'intensification of individual properties, particularly in relation to corner treatments, is a common occurrence' in the area, my attention has been drawn to only one other development, at land adjacent to 3 Park Road. Full details of this are not before me, but I have considered the information provided and viewed the development. It is a corner plot but is not adjacent to a green space. The development respects the building line in both directions and is set back from the road on both sides of the corner. In addition, the development is flats, rather than an individual house, meaning private amenity space expectations are different. Regardless of this, private amenity space, set back from the road, has been provided for one of the flats. Therefore, in these respects, the development at 3 Park Road and the impact it has on the surrounding area is significantly different to the appeal site and proposal. In any event, each case must be considered on its own merits, impacts and specific context, with direct parallels not easily drawn.
8. I conclude that the proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. Consequently, the development would not comply with Policy HC1 of the Stroud District Local Plan 2015 (LP), which amongst other things, seeks to ensure that proposed housing is of a layout and design that is compatible with the character and appearance of the part of the settlement in which it would be located.

Private amenity space

9. Whilst the area of outside amenity space would be of a usable shape and not excessively small, it would be out of keeping with the prevailing layout of amenity space in the area. More significantly, all of the outside space for the proposed new dwelling would be directly adjacent to the road and the public path around the edge of the green space meaning it would lack privacy. Any proposal to create some privacy, such as the erection of high boundary walls or fences, would result in a further erosion of the characteristic openness of the area. The site would be next to public open space, but this would not provide the private amenity space that would be expected from a dwelling in this area.
10. Some other corner properties in the area make use of land adjacent to the road as amenity space. However, I have not been made aware of, and did not observe any houses during my site visit, where all of the amenity space is adjacent to the road.
11. I conclude that the proposed development would not provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants, with regard to private amenity space. Consequently, the development would not comply with Policy HC1 of the LP, which amongst other things, seeks to ensure that an appropriate area of private amenity space is provided for the occupiers of each dwelling house.

12. The Council's second reason for refusal cites Policy ES3 in reference to private amenity space, with Policy HC1 being cited in relation to character, under the first reason for refusal. Policy ES3 does not make reference to private amenity space and I therefore find no specific conflict with Policy ES3 of the LP.

Drainage

13. No drainage information has been provided with the appeal, so I am unable to reach a conclusion regarding drainage of the site, or whether it would comply with Policy ES4 of the LP. However, given the scale and location of the proposal, I have been presented with no evidence which would lead me to conclude that adequate drainage could not be provided. Were I minded to allow the appeal, details could be secured via the imposition of a suitably worded pre-commencement condition. Accordingly, I find no conflict with Policy ES4 of the LP, which seeks to prevent flooding.

Other Matters

14. The site is located within the core catchment area of the Severn Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC) where mitigation is sought against the ecological impacts of new residential dwellings. I have been provided with no details of this SAC or the scale and type of mitigation that is sought. A signed Unilateral Undertaking (UU) has been provided with this appeal stating that commencement will not be permitted until the Severn Estuary Mitigation Contribution is paid to the Council. While the appellant's statement of case contains an amount, this is not specified in the UU. Given that I have found the proposal unacceptable on other grounds, there is no need for me to consider the implications of the proposal on the SAC.
15. The proposal would provide an additional dwelling which would contribute to local supply in a residential area. However, the area has a 5 year housing land supply so I can give this little weight. Despite the lack of overlooking, the dwelling being a modest scale, the use of suitable materials, and provision of adequate parking, the proposal would have detrimental impacts as set out above.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above and taking into account the development plan as a whole and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Helen Davies

INSPECTOR