

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 September 2022

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 September 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/T1410/W/21/3289254

7 Wallis Avenue, Eastbourne, BN23 6LR

- 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 G Smith against the decision of Eastbourne Borough Council.
 - The application Ref PC/210260, dated 19 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 8 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of 1no. two bedroom dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the locality.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is the side garden area of a end of terrace two storey property in a corner junction position. The principal road has a suburban character in terms of width and the array of terraces and semi-detached homes set along it with front gardens. The side road (Wallis Place) is unusually narrow and leads to a turning head with semi-detached homes alongside. Wallis Place provides rear access to garaging and parking for the host property. The spacing of the host property and its terrace of 3 attached dwellings is broadly mirrored on the other side of the junction. The locality is of established character and pleasing appearance. The proposal is as described above and would be a hipped roof two storey dwelling attached to the side of host property.
 4. The flank wall of the planned property would extend to the site boundary and run along the back edge of the pavement. In some situations, this might be norm or at least acceptable in a wider streetscene. Regrettably this is not the case in this instance. The unusual narrowness of Wallis Place would mean insufficient open area as a context around the proposed property and it would consequently look very cramped and out of place. Furthermore, tight development of this nature is certainly not characteristic in this locality which also features a symmetry of terraces that this scheme would markedly unsettle. The aesthetic impacts of the relatively bulky development would far outweigh the removal of a single storey dilapidated lean-to and a greenhouse which presently take up part of the intended footprint area. The planned
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dwelling would remove any sense of spaciousness and look ill at ease and alien in the streetscene on this junction, not least because of the already narrow entrance to Wallis Place.

5. However, the principal parties agree that this Borough does not have a five-year housing supply and this factor needs to be considered. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the Framework. Using that document's content, I must assess whether the appeal scheme falls within the sustainable development category, which embodies economic, social and environmental objectives. As the Framework makes clear the development should be approved unless adverse impacts significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the document taken as a whole.
6. From my perspective I see some modest economic gain from construction activities and an additional family locally. The property would provide the social benefit of another household in the area and of a further home to meet the shortfall in the Borough, albeit numerically any gain would be minimal. On the environmental front there would be the character and appearance disbenefits that I highlight above and which to my mind significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits and hence give rise the scheme not representing sustainable development.
7. Saved Policy UHT1 and UHT4 of the Borough Plan 2007 and Policies B2 and D1 of the Core Strategy Local Plan 2013 are relevant. Taken together and amongst other matters they seek well designed development that would harmonise with local character and appearance, reflect local distinctiveness, be of appropriate scale and form, positively contribute to an area, and be sustainable development generally. I conclude that the proposal would conflict with these policies.

Other matters

8. I do recognise that design-thought has been given to materials, fenestration, roof form, internal accommodation, energy efficiency, parking and external amenity space and that the scheme would not impinge upon amenity enjoyed by neighbours. I have carefully considered all the points raised by the Appellant but these matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to the main issue identified above.
9. I confirm that policies in the Framework have been considered; the Council's policies which I cite mirror its relevant objectives.

Overall conclusion

10. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the locality. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR