



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 June 2023

by N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4th July 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3425/D/23/3318397

8 Grindley Lane, Meir Heath, Stoke-on-Trent, ST3 7LW

- 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 Paul McGlynn against the decision of Stafford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/35143/HOU, dated 20 October 2021, was refused by notice dated 9 February 2023.
 - The development proposed is raising of existing roof to create larger first floor and extension/reconfiguration to existing ground floor.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached dormer bungalow. It is located in a residential area, largely characterised by the presence of detached dormer bungalows and detached and semi-detached two storey dwellings.
 4. The appeal property, like other dwellings along Grindley Lane in this location, is set back from the road behind a grass verge and pavement. The dwelling is set back from the pavement behind a further grass verge, a brick boundary wall and a front garden/parking area. It has a parking area to one side and gardens to the other side and rear. Some development appears to be underway at the appeal property.
 5. There is a dormer bungalow to one side of the appeal property and a one and half storey dwelling to the other. Both are set well back from the road within comfortable garden plots.
 6. On the opposite side of Grindley Lane to the appeal property, two storey semi-detached dwellings are set back from the road behind a very wide grass verge and a pavement, hedgerows and/or fencing/planting and front gardens/parking areas. Gaps between pairs of dwellings provide for glimpses through to trees, garages and garden areas to the rear.
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7. The presence of the wide grass verges, gardens, gaps around dwellings/pairs of dwellings and trees, provides the area with a significant sense of spaciousness and greenery. Further, the generally low height and modest scale of the appeal property and its neighbours to either side, contributes to and appears in keeping with these qualities.
8. The proposed development would result in significant increases to the height, width and overall volume of the appeal property. The combined scale of the changes proposed would result in a form of development that would fail to appear subordinate to the host dwelling but would have the effect of overwhelming its original appearance.
9. The changes proposed would lead the appeal property to draw undue attention to itself as a large, bulky and prominent form of development that would to some considerable extent, appear "squeezed" onto its plot relative to neighbouring dwellings set in comfortable garden plots. This would be to the detriment of the spacious attributes of the area.
10. Further, the scale and bulk of the proposal would lead it to appear in stark contrast to and at odds with, the modest scale of neighbouring dwellings and I find that this would result in it drawing attention to itself as an incongruous form of development.
11. Taking all of the above into account, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework and to Local Plan¹ Policies C5 and N1, which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.

Other Matters

12. In support of the proposal, the appellant refers to approvals for other forms of development in the vicinity. However, there is nothing before me to demonstrate that these comprise developments so similar to that the subject of this appeal as to provide for direct comparison. Notwithstanding this, I have found that the proposed development would result in significant harm and this is not something that is mitigated or outweighed by other developments elsewhere.
13. The appellant considers that the appeal site should not be regarded as being located in the open countryside. I note above that the site is located in a residential area. Further, the appeal site and its surroundings have urban qualities. However, the proposed development would result in harm to local character and hence the decision below.
14. The appellant draws my attention to the proposal's sustainable qualities, including energy efficiency measures. These represent positive aspects of the development proposed but they do not outweigh the harm identified.

¹ Reference: The Plan for Stafford Borough (2014).

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR