



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 November 2023

by E Catcheside BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15th December 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/V2825/W/23/3320527

2 Pinewood Road, Northampton, West Northamptonshire NN3 2RB

- 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 Tomas Doran against the decision of West Northamptonshire Council.
 - The application Ref WNN/2022/0792, dated 5 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 1 November 2022.
 - The development proposed is detached two bedroom bungalow.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Council adopted the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 2011-2029 (LP2) after the planning application was determined. The LP2 replaced the Northampton Local Plan 1993-2006 (NLP). Therefore, Policy E20 of the NLP, which is referenced on the decision notice, no longer exists. The Council has advised in its statement that Policies SD1, Q1, and Q2 of the LP2, together with Policies H1 and S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan Part 1 (2014) (CS) are relevant to the appeal. I have determined the appeal with regard to the adopted development plan at the time of my decision.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site lies in an area comprising broad avenues of two-storey terraced and semi-detached properties that are set well back from the highway, and include deep rear gardens. The appeal site forms part of the rear garden of 2 Pinewood Road, which is a corner property, and the site has a frontage onto Greenfield Avenue.
5. The majority of properties on Greenfield Avenue are semi-detached, sharing many of the features that contribute to the area's local distinctiveness, including their two-storey height and building line, which is set back many metres behind front gardens and driveways. These features add to the area's open character.
6. The proposed development would be located adjacent to an existing bungalow that has been erected to the rear of 1 Greenfield Road, and has been designed to mirror its form and appearance. However, the proposed dwelling would

- occupy a plot that is more constrained than the generously sized plots that are prevalent in the locality, and the dwelling would fill almost the entire depth of the site, leaving limited circulation space around the proposed building.
7. The small plot size has a limiting effect on the quantity of the proposed outdoor amenity space, which would be uncharacteristically small when compared to the large, deep gardens that are common to the locality and would therefore be at odds with the prevailing local character.
 8. Moreover, the front elevation of the dwelling would sit close to the highway boundary which, aside from the adjacent bungalow, would be a discordant feature on Greenfield Avenue. The addition of the proposed dwelling to create a 'pair' of bungalows would accentuate this incongruity and, rather than providing balance, would exacerbate the visual discordance of the dwellings when compared with the area's prevailing character and appearance.
 9. I conclude that the development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would, therefore, be contrary to Policies H1 and S10 of the CS and Policy Q1 of the LP2, and the National Planning Policy Framework. Taken together, and amongst other things, these policies seek to make efficient use of land and deliver housing that is of high-quality design, has had regard to the character and density of the local area, and contributes to a locally distinctive sense of place. There would also be conflict with Policy SD1 of the LP2, which provides a presumption in favour of sustainable development as defined by the Framework. The Framework places considerable weight on development reflecting the character of its surroundings.
 10. Given that no harm has been identified with regard to the adequacy of the proposed outdoor amenity space in meeting the needs of its future users, I do not find conflict with Policy Q2 of the LP2.

Other Matters

11. The dwelling would provide an additional home within an existing residential area, and it would therefore contribute to the national planning objective to significantly boost the supply of homes. Given its modest size, the proposed dwelling could also be more affordable than the larger properties in the area. However, the contribution that would be made to local housing supply by a single dwelling would be very limited and, therefore, I attach little weight to this benefit in my consideration of the appeal.
12. My attention has been drawn to the Council's grant of planning permission for the adjacent bungalow to the appeal site. I have limited information before me to establish the full circumstances that led to that development being accepted. Nonetheless, it is clear from the evidence, and my own observations, that the existing bungalow is constructed on a larger plot than the appeal site and is therefore materially different from the proposal. Moreover, I have considered the appeal scheme on its own merits and with regard to the character and appearance of the area at the time of my decision, which includes the adjacent bungalow.
13. The proposed development would include the removal of the existing garage on the site, which is in poor condition. However, any benefit associated with the loss of the garage would not offset the harm that would be caused to local

character, due to the incongruence of the proposed development in the street scene.

14. No harm has been identified in respect of the standard of the proposed accommodation for future occupiers, or the effect of the development on the living conditions of neighbouring residents. From the evidence, and my own observations, I see no reason to take a different view. The absence of harm weighs neither for nor against the proposal.

Conclusion

15. The proposed development conflicts with the development plan when read as a whole. There are no material considerations before me to indicate that a decision should be made otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

E Catchside

INSPECTOR