
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 December 2023

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19th December 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Y2003/W/23/3324190

14 Leaburn Road, Messingham, North Lincolnshire DN17 3SR

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Lisa White against the decision of North Lincolnshire Council.
 - The application Ref PA/2022/2019, dated 5 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 June 2023.
 - The development proposed is to build 1No bungalow in rear garden of 14 Leaburn Road. Widening of existing dropped crossing adjacent No 12 Leaburn Road to gain access into new property. Existing free draining stone to be used and extended. Please note that No14 Leaburn Road vehicular dropped crossing is located on Hall Rise. Indicative bungalow layout, parking at front and rear garden, attached with this application for information purposes only.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. The application was submitted in outline form with only access to be determined at this stage. Plans have been provided that show an example of how the site could be laid out and drained. I have taken all the drawings that were submitted into account insofar as they are relevant to my consideration of the principle of development and the intended access arrangements.
3. An interested party raises concern that the new residential plot is larger than could be physically accommodated 'on the ground'. I have taken this concern into account in my assessment of the proposal, which is based on all the submitted evidence and an inspection of the site and its surroundings. On that basis, I am satisfied that the details of the appeal scheme as shown on the drawings and detailed in the written evidence allow a reasonable assessment of the development sought.

Main issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development firstly, on the character and appearance of the local area; and secondly, whether the proposal would provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The proposal is to erect a bungalow in the rear garden of the appeal property, which is a single storey dwelling that occupies a prominent corner plot at the junction of Leaburn Road and Hall Rise within a predominantly residential area. The existing plot would be subdivided between the new and existing dwellings. Access to the new addition would be from Leaburn Road by extending an existing vehicle crossover that currently serves No 12.
6. The new dwelling would address Leaburn Road with No 14 on one side, which actually faces Hall Rise, and a row of 3 very similar detached bungalows on the other. These existing dwellings are set back from the road behind front gardens with driveways that are mostly paired with the neighbouring property. The broad consistency in built form of these dwellings and their orderly arrangement, with the adjacent row of bungalows on Leaburn Road evenly spaced apart and following a similar building line, gives the existing development in local street scene a rhythm that is locally distinctive. Although I saw a mix of houses and bungalows in the wider estate, with some placed closer to the adjacent property than others, it is within this short row of similar bungalows that the appeal scheme would be visually 'read'.
7. In that context, the proposed dwelling would occupy a plot that would be noticeably narrower and shorter than those on either side of the site. The length of the back garden to No 14 would also be significantly reduced. By introducing new built form between Nos 12 and 14, the proposal would also reduce the gap that separates these properties. As a result, a new bungalow would appear to be nestled into a relatively narrow and small plot with limited space on either side. This arrangement would be incompatible with the more spacious pattern of existing development that prevails locally, in which nearby bungalows occupy wider and larger plots and adjacent buildings are spaced further apart than would be case with the proposal.
8. The layout, appearance, scale and landscaping of the proposal could, to some extent, mitigate the adverse impact of the development. These are matters reserved for subsequent approval. However, given the limited space available within the plot, and the well-established pattern of existing development with which it would need to fit into, it is very likely that the new built form would not be readily assimilated into the street scene. When seen from Leaburn Road, the appeal scheme is likely to draw the eye as a discordant and visually intrusive form of development, notwithstanding detailed design considerations.
9. On the first main issue, I conclude that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the local area. As such, it is contrary to Policy DS1 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan (LP) and Policy CS5 of the North Lincolnshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy (CS). These policies promote a high standard of design and aim to ensure that all development is appropriate for their context. It is also contrary to the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which states, amongst other things, that development should be sympathetic to local character and add to the overall quality of the area.

Living conditions

10. Although modest in size, it is likely that the site could physically accommodate a bungalow with sufficient space for a small garden, off-road parking and bin stores. Some of the rooms within the new dwelling are likely to be small, as the indicative layout shows. However, the internal living space could be arranged to ensure that all the rooms are adequate in size by, for instance, introducing an open plan element. Placing the main windows primarily in the west and east elevations of the new dwelling, as illustrated by the appellant, should allow enough natural light into and a reasonable outlook from the living space to avoid the rooms feeling gloomy or uninviting to future occupiers.
11. On the second main issue, I conclude that the proposed development could provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers. On that basis, the appeal scheme is not contrary to the policies cited by the Council insofar as they seek to safeguard residential amenity. It does not conflict with the Framework, which notes that development should provide a high standard of amenity for all users. My favourable finding on this matter does not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified in relation to the first main issue.

Other matters

12. The Officer's report recommended that the application be approved with conditions. While I have carefully considered this report, I have assessed the proposal afresh and on its own planning merits, as I am required to do.
13. Interested parties raise additional concern with regard to access, off-road parking, highway safety, and the living conditions of others and also whether the proposal would amount to overdevelopment. These are important matters and I have taken into account all the submitted evidence. However, given my findings on the first main issue, these considerations have not been critical to my decision.

Conclusion

14. The proposed development would conflict with the development plan as a whole. There are no material considerations, including the policies of the Framework, which indicate that the decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the development plan.
15. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR