



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 December 2023

by N Bromley BA Hons DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 January 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/X3405/W/23/3323761

25 Coppice Road, Rugeley, Staffordshire WS15 1LT

- 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 Elwell, against the decision of Cannock Chase District Council.
 - The application Ref CH/23/0102, dated 24 February 2023, was refused by notice dated 14 April 2023.
 - The development proposed is erection of one bedroomed bungalow.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) on 19 December 2023 and updated on 20 December 2023. The main parties have been given the opportunity to comment on this version and I have had regard to the revised Framework in reaching my decision. For the avoidance of doubt, where reference is made in this decision to paragraph numbers, they are taken from the latest version of the Framework.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the area; and
 - highways safety.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site forms the sub-divided rear garden of 25 Coppice Road (No 25), a semi-detached two-storey dwelling, which occupies a corner plot position at the junction with Hislop Road. The site is overgrown and is enclosed by temporary fencing to prevent access, but it is open to views from Hislop Road.
5. The surrounding area is residential and is primarily characterised by two-storey semi-detached dwellings of a largely consistent appearance with rendered walls and tiled roofs. However, there are occasional blocks of two-storey dwellings, as well as detached dwellings in the wider area also.
6. The proposed development is for the construction of a modest one bedroomed bungalow that would front Hislop Road. It would have a small front yard area, modest private rear garden, and a tandem parking arrangement to the side.

7. A single storey detached building, in this location, would be a stark contrast to the existing buildings in the street scene, which have a two-storey scale and are primarily semi-detached. Additionally, the proposal would appear as an isolated dwelling due to it being the only dwelling that fronts the road on this side of Hislop Road. The sloping ground levels would further heighten the detached appearance of the proposal due to its elevated position. Therefore, for these reasons, the proposal would appear abrupt and incongruous in the context of the area.
8. The use of appropriate facing and roofing materials, to match those of neighbouring buildings, would help to soften the effect of the proposal but it would not overcome the unacceptable harm identified.
9. For the reasons outlined above, I find that the proposed development would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore conflict with the aims of Policy CP3 of the Cannock Chase Local Plan (Part 1) 2014, which, amongst other things, seeks development that complements the character and appearance of the local area. It would also fail to accord with the design objectives of the Framework which seeks to achieve well-designed and beautiful places.

Highways safety

10. The appeal site is set behind the pavement edge, as well as a narrow strip of grass. A new access point is proposed off Hislop Road and a tandem parking arrangement (driveway) is proposed for two vehicles to the side of the proposed dwelling.
11. The appellant has suggested that the proposed access and parking layout is virtually identical to that proposed in connection with the previous application for a two-storey dwelling on the site which received no objections from the Highway Authority (the HA). The Council has indicated that the arrangements were different and that the parking provision was proposed on the opposite side of the dwelling, thus not being confined by the shared boundary with No 47. I have not been provided with the full details of the parking arrangements for the previous case but on the evidence before me there appears to be differences between the two proposals. Nonetheless, as I am required to do, I have determined the case before me on its own merits.
12. The HA recommended that the application should be refused on the grounds that the proposed development fails to provide two spaces for No 25 and two parking spaces, of an appropriate width, for the proposed dwelling, as well as appropriate visibility splays.
13. However, while I acknowledge that visibility may be restricted by the fence on the boundary with No 47, the volume of traffic using the road is low and the pavement and grass strip would allow a good level of visibility from the proposed driveway. Furthermore, the proposal is for a one-bedroom dwelling and the use of the driveway would also be low.
14. Additionally, while I accept that the narrow driveway may make the parking spaces undesirable and at least one vehicle may be forced to park on the road, there are small blocks of communal parking areas in various locations in the locality. On-street parking problems are not evident in the locality and one

vehicle parking on the road would not exacerbate an existing on street parking problem that would cause unacceptable highway safety implications.

15. Consequently, on the evidence before me, the proposed development would not cause an unacceptable impact on highway safety. As such, it would not conflict with the guidance of paragraphs 114 and 115 of the Framework, which requires that safe and suitable access is available for all users, and that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

16. The construction of one additional dwelling in a sustainable urban area would add to the mix of dwelling types in the area, particularly a smaller one-bedroom property. The proposal would also contribute to boosting the supply of new housing, as referenced in the Framework, and would provide social and economic benefits to local services during the construction and occupancy phases without conflict with neighbouring land uses. However, these benefits would be limited by virtue of the proposal only adding one additional dwelling to the housing supply in the area.
17. That there would be no conflict with neighbouring land uses, including no unacceptable loss of privacy to neighbouring occupiers, weighs neutrally in the planning balance. That there would be no unacceptable harm to highway safety also weighs neutrally in the balance.
18. The proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. I attach significant weight to that harm.
19. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would conflict with policies contained within the development plan as a whole. I have found no other material circumstances that would outweigh that conflict. As such, the appeal is dismissed.

N Bromley

INSPECTOR