



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 April 2024

by R Bartlett PGDip URP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/V2635/W/23/3333241

1 Stody Drive, South Wootton, PE30 3UQ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Bush against the decision of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 21/01921/F.
 - The development proposed is 2no. dwellings following demolition of existing dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The development is described on the application form as "*2no. proposed dwellings following extensions and alterations to existing dwelling*". However, as it is clear from the submitted drawings that the existing dwelling would be demolished, I have used the Council's description of development, which more accurately describes the proposal.
3. Whilst I have only been provided with one set of drawings, it is evident from the information before me that a different scheme was originally submitted to the Council and that this was amended prior to a decision being made. I have determined the appeal based upon drawing numbers 21127 02 revision L and 221127 03 revision L.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. Stody Drive is a small cul-de-sac comprising a mixture of two-storey detached and semi-detached houses, and two detached bungalows. Properties are set back from the highway, behind gardens, which are predominantly open fronted or bound by planting. A densely landscaped earth bund runs along the northern and western boundaries of the cul-de-sac, which as well as reducing noise from adjacent roads and commercial premises, provides biodiversity benefits and makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.
6. The appeal site itself is occupied by a centrally located modest detached bungalow, a modest area of hardstanding, and various small, detached outbuildings, on a large corner plot. There is a two-storey detached house and garden beyond the northern boundary fence, with the remaining sides adjacent

to the public highway being bound by soft landscaping, except for a small section of fencing that is set back behind an area of grass verge.

7. The gable elevations of the bungalow follow roughly the same building lines as the front and rear elevations of the houses to the north of it. Whilst the brick outbuilding to the northeast of the bungalow encroaches slightly forward of this building line, due to its small scale and its positioning between Nos. 1 and 3 Stody Drive, it does not appear incongruous.
8. The proposed new dwellings, like the existing bungalow would have their front elevations facing south. The eastern side elevation, as opposed to being dual fronted to reflect its corner position, would be blank except for a single door at ground floor level. Whilst I acknowledge that this is also the case at present, the existing property due to its single storey nature and being set further back from the eastern boundary, is less visually prominent and imposing than the new two-storey gable elevation would be.
9. The gable elevation of Plot 2 would extend much closer to the pavement than both the existing bungalow and dwellings to the north of it. Although there are currently four close boarded timber fence panels enclosing the area of garden between the brick outbuilding and the eastern boundary, I am unaware of the planning status of this. Furthermore, the proposed extended area of fencing that would replace the Laurel hedging would abut the back edge of the pavement and would not be set back behind a grass verge. The siting and design of this plot would therefore detract from the existing open frontages and building lines that are prevalent within the street scene and contribute to its pleasant appearance.
10. The dwellings would each have a wide frontage, with a very narrow shared passage between them. Plot 1 would extend much closer to the landscaped bund than the existing bungalow and dwellings to the north of it. Given the proximity of this proposed house to the adjacent trees, which are mostly outside of the appellant's ownership and control, there is likely to be future pressure to fell or undertake extensive pruning works to them as a result of them overshadowing and dropping leaves and debris onto the new dwelling and its garden area.
11. The vehicular access would be relocated closer to the junction of Langley Road, and the existing lawned garden and hedge to the front of the bungalow would be replaced with a substantial area of hardstanding, which would be visually prominent upon entering Stody Drive. Furthermore, the proposed parking and turning space, particularly for plot 2, would be very close to both the front of the new dwelling and the edge of the footway.
12. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would appear cramped, poorly designed, and poorly laid out, and would harmfully detract from the spacious and open leafy green setting of the area. Consequently, it would not accord with Policy CS08 of the Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council Core Strategy 2011, Policy DM15 of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan 2016, or Policies H2 and H4 of the South Wootton Neighbourhood Plan, which seek, amongst other things, to ensure new development is of high quality design that responds sensitively and sympathetically to its local setting and helps to preserve the open and green character of the village.

Other Matters

13. I acknowledge that the proposal would make effective use of land in a sustainable location, that the dwellings would accord with nationally described space standards, and that the rear gardens of the new dwellings would be of similar size to others in the area, albeit that of plot 1 would be largely shaded as demonstrated by the submitted Tree Report. I also acknowledge that two-storey development would not be inappropriate in principle on this site. However, the benefit of providing one additional dwelling on this constrained corner plot, would not outweigh the harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area, by the loss of landscaping and open green space between buildings and the highway, the lack of space between dwellings and the poor-quality design and layout of the proposal currently before me.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

R Bartlett

INSPECTOR