
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 April 2024

by Nick Bowden BA(Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/W/23/3334960

Charnwood, Church Road, Sutton, Bedfordshire SG19 2NB

- 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 Simon Lewis against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - The application Ref is CB/23/02756/FULL.
 - The development proposed is for a replacement dwelling and proposed garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was revised in December 2023. As the changes do not materially affect the main issues in this case, the parties have not been invited to make further comments.
3. Reference has been made to the Sutton Neighbourhood Plan 2021 in the Officer's Report and Appellant's Statement and I have had regard to it although this document has not been referenced in the Council's reason for refusal.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. The existing dwelling at Charnwood comprises a detached, mid-20th century home constructed in tan brick. It is set within a generous plot. The house is set along Church Road which is characterised by other, typically large, detached homes in similarly sized plots – many of which have been altered and extended. The houses vary in their individual design vernacular however, most commonly, they leave an appreciable distance to their boundaries or, where they do not, they are of a lower overall height, depth or profile.
6. The dwelling proposed here would fill much of the width of the plot with its two-storey height and would have a deep plan form. The use of a crown roof highlights this, but I do appreciate this feature would not necessarily be apparent in the street scene. The height is emphasised by three gables that would address the street frontage, and the depth of the building would be visible through gaps between neighbouring homes. As a result, it would appear dominant and excessively large by comparison to neighbouring homes along Church Road.

7. Although the homes along Church Road are certainly sizeable, the dwelling proposed here would appear materially larger than these to the detriment of the character of the area. For this reason, I conclude that the proposed replacement dwelling would fail to comply with policies HQ1 and SP7 of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2021 (CBLP), the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide and provisions of the Framework. These policies require new development to be of a high design standard and respond positively to their context.
8. In making this assessment, I have had regard to the permission for extensions to the existing dwelling which was recently granted by the Council¹. However, this extant scheme is different; insofar as it allows for a greater degree of space at first floor level and lacks the verticality created by the proposed scheme due to there only being two front gables. I have further recognised that this permitted scheme was for extensions to the existing building as opposed to the appeal proposal for a replacement dwelling – nevertheless, I have taken account of both based on the resultant effects on the character of the area. This includes the largely comparable internal floorspace and individual designs.
9. I have also considered the effect of the proposed detached garage. Whilst the presence of this structure does not assist in minimising the amount of built form as is proposed, it is not dissimilar in size or position to other garages in similar locations along Church Road. Moreover, it remains set-back from the boundary with the road and would not appear excessively prominent. As such the proposed garage, of itself, would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and would accord with policies HQ1 and SP7 of the CBLP and the Framework.

Conclusion

10. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

Nick Bowden

INSPECTOR

¹ CB/23/00064/FULL