



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 June 2024

by A Knight BA PG Dip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/W0530/W/24/3336235

4 Haslingfield Road, Harlton, Cambridgeshire CB23 1ER

- 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 Silvio Di Lorenzo of Belvisi Property Ltd against the decision of South Cambridgeshire District Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/03674/FUL.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of an existing linked-detached bungalow and the erection of a replacement detached two-storey house and a bungalow. Alteration to access.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The Council's reason for refusal relates only the proposed bungalow. Therefore, the main issue is the effect of the proposed bungalow on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is on the main thoroughfare through Harlton, a settlement which, notwithstanding limited semidetached and terraced housing at its fringes, is characterised by detached residential properties on generous individual plots. Most local properties are oriented toward the main road and have their own distinct vehicular access.
4. A small number of roadways and tracks branch off the main throughfare, leading to small pockets of further development. In such cases, homes set away from the main road are laid out following the principles described above; each generally occupies a spacious, clearly defined individual plot, and has its own private access. In these respects, there is a general but tangible uniformity to the local layout that makes a notable contribution to its overall character.
5. The appeal property is a link-detached bungalow occupying most of the width of a substantial plot. It is connected to its neighbour via a flat-roofed garage. There is no fence dividing the appeal site frontage from that of its linked neighbour, but the plots are demarcated by separate, private driveways. In this way, the appeal site adheres to the characteristics of the local area as described above.
6. Open land behind the appeal site rises to the crest of a hill, visible from Haslingfield Road above the current garage. This view gives an early indication

from the public realm that land behind the houses in this part of the street is undeveloped and verdant.

7. Views from the rear of the appeal site confirm the impression gained from the street; the garden of the appeal site combines with those of 6, 8, 10 and 12 Haslingfield Road to create a distinct, continuous corridor of open green space in that direction, interspersed with mature trees. This effect is accentuated by relatively low garden fences, particularly between the appeal site and No 6, and by glimpses of open farmland beyond the rear boundary of the appeal site.
8. The boundary between the appeal site and Red Lion House is marked by dense, mature greenery that significantly screens development in that direction. In this way, the presence of houses at 94 to 96a High Street is prevented from impinging upon the undeveloped, open feel of the gardens, as described above.
9. The appeal proposal would involve the replacement of the current bungalow with two new homes. A shared driveway would lead past a new detached house at the front of the plot to a bungalow located beyond. When viewed from the street, and in the local context described above, it would be evident from the access arrangements that the plot had been subdivided into two smaller ones, an arrangement entirely out of keeping with the prevailing layout and the character derived from it.
10. Although the proposed bungalow would utilise a flat roof in the area directly aligned with the new access, it would nevertheless be prominent when viewed from the street. The bungalow would be tall enough to be visible over any reasonable means of enclosure and the new, locally uncommon, access and gates to the bungalow would highlight its presence, leading the eye in that direction.
11. In these ways, it would be readily apparent to users of the street that substantial development had taken place on land to the rear of the plot, and that the current open character of the land behind the houses had been significantly eroded as a result. The relative prominence of the development would exacerbate both its visual impact from the street, and the extent to which it would not conform to local character.
12. The proposed bungalow would present a long, continuous wall towards the rear gardens of 6, 8, 10 and 12 Haslingfield Road. Due to its height and depth, the bungalow would be visually prominent over any reasonable garden fence and, due to being entirely without visual precedent in the land behind houses on this part of the street, constitute a wholly incongruous addition to what is currently a continuous stretch of open, green, and undeveloped land.
13. In the ways set out above, the proposed development would be at odds with the local pattern of development, and the character of the area derived from it.
14. The appellant has drawn my attention to several nearby developments they consider comparable to the appeal proposals. In each instance the decision to grant planning permission was taken before the current development plan policies were adopted, significantly so in most cases. For that reason, I have only had regard to the role these other developments play in forming the character and appearance of the area.
15. The homes relating to permission C/0363/62 are behind the local building line but are accessed only by a narrow footpath and are not comparable to the

appeal proposals in terms of the impact the houses or the access to them has upon the street, therefore. In addition, these properties are sufficiently far from the appeal site not to inform the immediate context.

16. The developments relating to S/1662/99/F, S/0868/78/F and S/0702/95/O are not backland development in the same way the appeal proposals are, in that they do not involve access over one plot to reach a second property. Rather, each of these developments accords to the characteristics of the area described above in that they comprise generous individual plots with private access from a roadway. In these ways they are distinctly different to the appeal proposals.
17. The development relating to S/0464/04/F is wholly distinct from the appeal proposals and the other cited examples, in that it comprises a building positioned to create a courtyard with a commercial premises (the local public house), a relationship not replicable elsewhere in the village. The dwelling related to S/1497/83/F is located as much alongside its neighbours as behind them and has its own driveway. In these ways, the two properties are distinctly different from the appeal proposal.
18. Whilst I note the examples provided by the appellant as listed above, I find them not directly comparable to the appeal proposals and afford them limited weight in favour of the scheme, therefore.
19. Overall, For the reasons set out above the proposed bungalow would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, the development would not comply with Policies S/7, HQ/1 and H/16 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) (the Local Plan) where they require development to be of a scale, density and character appropriate to, and compatible with, the location and protect and enhance local features of green space and landscape.

Conclusion

20. 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. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

A Knight

INSPECTOR