



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 October 2024

by David Troy BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13th November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/W2845/W/24/3344731

98 Fullingdale Road, Northampton NN3 2QJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant permission for an application for Permission in Principle.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Andrew Lockley against the decision of West Northamptonshire Council.
 - The application Ref is 2024/0390/PIP.
The development proposed is erection of a 2-bedroom bungalow.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposal is for permission in principle. Planning Practice Guidance advises that this is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development. The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages: the first stage (or permission in principle stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle and the second (technical details consent) stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed. This appeal relates to the first of these 2 stages.
3. The scope of the considerations for permission in principle is limited to location, land use and the amount of development permitted. All other matters are considered as part of a subsequent Technical Details Consent application if permission in principle is granted. I have determined the appeal accordingly.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. The appeal site forms part of the garden area at the side of No. 98 Fullingdale Road (No. 98) a two storey semi-detached property that occupies a prominent triangular shaped corner plot. The indicative submitted plans show a detached two bed bungalow with provision of two parking spaces.
6. The appeal site is located in a mature well-established residential area, typically characterised by two storey semi-detached dwellings set back from the road behind front gardens/driveways, but with some bungalow style development nearby. The semi-detached properties are relatively evenly spaced, of comparable scale and form, with uniform separation distances

- between them. Where garages and other structures exist between dwellings, these are very low, clearly subsidiary, and have little impact upon the sense of separation. No. 98 being situated on a corner plot has more expansive grounds, which add to the open character and appearance of the area.
7. The existing character of the site would change significantly as a result of the development on this open undeveloped area of land and a change in the nature of the site would be an inevitable consequence of this. Variety does not necessarily lead to harm. Whilst the construction of a single storey bungalow in land use terms would not necessarily be significantly out of keeping with the overall character of the area, given their presence in the locality, the scale and amount of development proposed would nevertheless still be a significant addition in this particular location. Such positioning, on what would be an atypically narrow plot, would erode the visual gap between the dwelling and the highway, interrupting the established pattern of development and compromise the sense of space and openness in the area.
 8. These shortcomings would be exacerbated by the proposal's prominent position, which would be visible from a number of public vantage points along Fullingdale Road. The position of the proposed detached dwelling as illustrated on the submitted plans in close proximity to the site boundaries would provide limited opportunity to soften the impact of development through a comprehensive landscaping scheme in this location. I therefore consider that the proposed development, by virtue of its scale and siting, would fail to promote or reinforce the distinctive characteristic of the area and would adversely harm rather than positively contribute to the character and appearance of the area.
 9. I have considered the appellant's arguments that the design and layout of the proposed development, as illustrated on the submitted plans, has been carefully considered in order to minimise any impacts on the area and to respect the prevailing building line. Whilst the use of matching materials, fenestrations and the boundary treatment at the detailed technical design stage would assist with integrating the proposal with the area, these aspects do not overcome the adverse effects outlined above.
 10. Consequently, I conclude that the proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would be contrary to the overall aims of Policies H1 and S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Policy Q1 of the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 that, amongst other things, seeks to ensure that development proposals promote and contribute to good placemaking through a high standard of design which responds to the local character and characteristics of the site's immediate and wider context. The proposal would also not accord with the National Planning Policy Framework that developments should seek to secure a high quality of design (paragraph 131) that are sympathetic to the local character (paragraph 135).

Other Matters

11. I have noted the other developments drawn to my attention by the appellant. However, the bungalow and single storey developments in the area are of a different scale and form to the appeal scheme. As such, whilst I have taken these other examples into account, they do not materially alter my conclusions on the appeal proposal.

12. The appellant considers the proposal would constitute a sustainable form of development in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework. I have considered the various benefits put forward by the appellant that the proposal would bring arising from the scheme's accessible design, the effective use of land on a small site within an accessible location, through contributing to the housing supply, housing mix and specialist accommodation for older people and persons with disabilities in the area and meeting the appellant's accommodation needs for the current elderly tenant at No. 98. While I have given them some weight in favour of the appeal, these benefits would not be sufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified. For all these reasons, there are no other material considerations to outweigh the development plan conflicts identified.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Troy

INSPECTOR