



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 November 2024

by David Troy BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4 December 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/M2840/W/24/3350964

15 Woodfield Grove, Corby, North Northamptonshire NN17 1ES

- 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 & Mrs S James against the decision of North Northamptonshire Council.
 - The application Ref is NC/24/00150/DPA.
 - The development proposed is proposed new dwelling on land adjacent to 15 Woodfield Grove.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area having particular regard to the site's location within the Lloyds Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site forms part of the garden area at the side of No. 15 Woodfield Grove (No. 15), a one and half storey semi-detached property that occupies a triangular shaped corner plot within the Lloyds Conservation Area. The proposal would involve the construction of a two storey detached dwelling with provision of parking spaces and ancillary works.
4. It is located in a mature well-established residential cul-de-sac, characterised by a mixture of semi-detached and terraced dwellings with hipped and gabled roofs set back from the road behind front gardens/driveways. Although there is some variation in the design and style of the properties in the cul-de-sac, the properties are built in a spacious symmetrical layout around a central open space and amenity area, which are typical features of the estate pattern and design of the Lloyds Conservation Area.
5. The properties are relatively evenly spaced, of comparable scale and form, with uniform separation distances between them which positively contribute to its character. Where garages and other structures exist between dwellings, these are very low, clearly subsidiary, and have little impact upon the sense of separation. The significance of these features to the Lloyds Conservation Area can be readily appreciated within the immediate vicinity of the site. No. 15 being situated on a corner plot has more expansive grounds, which add to the open character and appearance of the area.

6. The existing character of the site would change significantly as a result of the development on this largely 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 two storey dwelling 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 form of the proposed development would nevertheless still be a significant addition in this particular location. Such positioning, on what would be an atypically narrow plot, would interrupt the established pattern of development in the area and compromise the sense of space and openness in the area.
7. These shortcomings would be exacerbated by the proposal's prominent position, which would be visible from a number of public vantage points along Woodfield Grove. The detailed design and appearance of the appeal scheme, with its pyramidal shaped hipped pitched roof and no chimney, would be very much at odds with the older more traditional scale, form and appearance of the adjacent properties, giving it greater prominence in relation to its surroundings. As such, I consider that the proposed development, by virtue of its scale, siting and design, 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.
8. I have considered the appellants argument that the design and layout of the proposed dwelling has been carefully considered and designed in order to minimise any impacts on the area. Whilst the use of matching materials, fenestrations and landscaping would assist in integrating the proposal with the area, these aspects do not overcome the adverse effects outlined above.
9. Given the location of the appeal site within the Lloyds Conservation Area, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. I consider that the proposed dwelling, by virtue of its scale, siting and design, would have a negative material impact and would fail to preserve or enhance the Lloyds Conservation Area.
10. Given the modest scale of the development, the harm would be less than substantial but in accordance with paragraph 208 of the National Planning Policy Framework, that harm should be weighed against any public benefits of the proposal. I note the appellants desire is to provide a new dwelling to meet the housing needs in the area, secure the optimum viable and effective use of the site. However, I find insufficient public benefit arising from this proposal to offset the identified harm to which I attach significant weight.
11. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would adversely harm the character and appearance of the area and would fail to preserve or enhance the Lloyds Conservation Area. It is contrary to the overall design and conservation aims of Policies 2 and 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2016 and Policy 16 of the Corby Local Plan Part 2 2021. These policies, amongst other things, seek to ensure that development proposals complement and respond to the local character and characteristics of the site's immediate and wider context and protect, preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the distinctive historic environment where it impacts on the significance of a heritage asset and its settings.

Other Matters

12. I have considered the various benefits put forward by the appellants that the proposal would bring arising from the scheme's design, the effective use of land on a small site within an accessible location and through contributing to the housing supply and housing mix in the area. 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