



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 February 2025

by **F P Tinsley MA (Hons) MBA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10th March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/X4725/D/24/3358056

1 Blackwell Crescent, WAKEFIELD, WF1 4FZ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Huda Khalil against the decision of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref: 24/01512/FUL, dated 19 September 2024, was refused by notice dated 21 November 2024.
 - The development is 'the conversion of garage to dining room / habitable room'.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on highway safety, with particular regard to the provision of parking.

Reasons

3. Blackwell Crescent is part of a modern housing development comprising a variety of house types. The appeal site is a detached four-bedroom dwelling with a driveway (hard standing area to the front of the property) approximately four metres in width. The appeal site also has a garage which is integrated within the fabric of the dwelling and is accessed from the driveway to the front of the site.
4. Policy LP27 (f) of the Wakefield District Local Plan 2036 (the LP) requires that proposals provide a level of parking provision appropriate to the proposal and its location. The current guidance is provided by the Wakefield District Residential Design Guide Part 1 Guidance for House Builders Supplementary Planning Document 2018 (RDG SPG) and the Wakefield Council Street Design Guide 2012 which includes Appendix A: Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG7) District Wide Parking Standards (SDG).
5. The SDG sets minimum standards for residential development. It states a minimum number of 3 spaces are required for a 4-bedroom property. Condition 18 of the original permission for the house (Ref: 17/02079/REM) required garages to be retained for vehicle parking. It is clear from the reason for the imposition of the condition, that garages were considered an important part of the off-street parking component for the wider development.
6. The carriageway to the front of the appeal site is approximately six metres in width and there is a proliferation of dropped kerbs affording access to off-street parking

to dwellings. These two factors reduce the potential for safe on-street parking significantly. The appeal site is also located immediately opposite the entrance to Fountains Close which further reduces the potential for on street parking in the immediate vicinity. There are no designated on-street parking restrictions. There is limited dedicated visitor parking available in the immediate vicinity of the site, so they will likely rely on on-street parking.

7. The hard standing driveway area to the front of the house is only sufficient in size to accommodate two carparking spaces as each space needs to be a minimum of 2 metres in width to accommodate a car. Three vehicles could not be simultaneously accommodated on this area due to its size. The integral garage measures 3.0m x 5.8m, which is slightly shorter than the suggested minimum (3.0m x 6.0m) in the SDG. However, it is likely that a garage of these dimensions would still have capacity to accommodate up to a mid-sized car. Therefore, the proposal would reduce the available parking from three spaces to two, and thereby would fail to meet the minimum standard in the SDG.
8. This shortfall would likely result in increased demand for on street parking which could lead to anti-social or more dangerous parking of vehicles near junctions or on footways. I note that the appeal site is close to the busy Neil Fox Way junction and several other minor junctions. There is limited evidence in relation to on street parking demand and practice before me, but the appellant refers to neighbours parking on street due to limited driveway space. Hence, the available information does not lead me to consider a relaxation in the recommended minimum provision would be justified in this case.
9. The appellant is not currently using the garage to accommodate a vehicle and does not intend to. Nevertheless, it is foreseeable that occupants of the property may change in time. It follows that there is no certainty that two parking spaces would always suffice. In its current form the potential remains for the garage to be utilised for vehicles should the requirement for parking associated with the dwelling increase.
10. The appellant explains that works to provide storage within the garage had taken place prior to their purchasing the property, and that displaced domestic storage could be accommodated in a shed. Be that as it may, I have given greater weight to the wording of condition 18 of the original permission for the house (Ref: 17/02079/REM) which stipulates that garages shall not be used for any purpose other than for the parking of a vehicle.
11. I find that reducing on-site car parking provision would be likely to create additional pressure on on-street parking. In this context that would generate highway safety concerns sufficient to justify refusal. This accords with the approach in the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 116, which confirms that development may be prevented or refused on highways grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.
12. Overall, the loss of existing off-street parking and the subsequent potential increase in on-street parking would be detrimental to highway safety and the safe functioning of the surrounding highway network and is therefore contrary to Policy LP27 of the LP.

Other Matters

13. The proposal would result in some benefits. I have had regard to the appellants statements that converting the garage into a habitable room would provide additional living space for their family and enhance the functionality and comfort of their home. Also, that the proposal will optimise the use of the building as a dwelling. However, these matters do not outweigh the harm I have identified above with regard to highway safety.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations that would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

F P Tinsley

INSPECTOR