
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 February 2025 by E Street BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24th March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/W/24/3351272

45 Salford Road, Aspley Guise, Central Bedfordshire MK17 8HT

- 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 Daniel Roberts against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - The application Ref is CB/24/00036/FULL.
 - The development proposed is described as “change of use of amenity land and proposed dropped kerb to provide vehicular access to 45 Salford Road, Aspley Guise”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure & Preliminary Matters

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal. In addition, a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published prior to the determination of this appeal. The substantive parts of the new version do not however differ from the previous insofar as they relate to the main issue. The cases of the main parties will not therefore be prejudiced by my reference thereto. Furthermore, the appeal process is not a suitable mechanism for negotiating on or amending schemes. This is for a fresh planning application.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site is a parcel of open grassed verge with a hedge and some trees which abuts the highway and creates a natural buffer between the road and the dwellings. The appeal dwelling is set back as part of a wider terrace that doesn't directly front the highway. Many of the verges along the street have been interrupted by vehicle crossovers. As such, the remaining larger parcels of open space have an important influence on the street scene. These features in combination lend a verdant and spacious feel which contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.
5. The appeal site mirrors the unbroken grassed area on the other side of Trunk Furlong, to which the introduction of a new access would be prominent and obtrusive. It would be highly visible from all approaches and be an obvious and

incongruous break in the currently unbroken green verge. The scale of the access would be emphasised by virtue of both the loss of the hedgerow and the access crossing the pedestrian pathway. Whilst a large amount of the verge would be retained, it would still result in an unnatural and urbanising gap in a currently preserved and planned section.

6. Notwithstanding suggested landscaping, a scheme for which I have not seen, interventions of this type would not reinstate the break in the verge which would unacceptably harm the street scene, reducing its pleasant spacious qualities in the above terms. In addition, the hedge remains relatively intact and contributes positively to the natural buffer of the green space regardless of its condition. The verge doesn't have any special designations, but that doesn't diminish its importance in its visual contribution.
7. I am unaware of the planning status of 37 Salford Road (No 37) or the policies and prevailing guidance at the time any works thereto were considered. The accesses are similar; however, the distinct difference is that the crossover to No 37 is limited due to the narrower verge, hedgerow being closer to the highway and lack of a pavement crossover. Photographic examples of other vehicular accesses have been provided; however, they do not lead me to finding in the appellant's favour.
8. Policy HQ10 of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2021 (CBLP) requires a balancing exercise of the benefits of the proposal against the need to protect the land when concerning the loss of a verge which contributes positively. I have not been drawn to any evidence to suggest existing parking is unsafe or how the scheme would improve pedestrian safety, and any raising of the property's appeal would be a private interest matter. I therefore give these matters only limited weight. As such, they would be insufficient to outweigh the harm I have found to the character and appearance of the area which, for the above reasons, would lead to conflict with Policies HQ1, HQ10 and EE5 of the CBLP 2021 and the Framework which together seek to ensure that development proposals are of a high-quality design and standard amongst other things.

Conclusion and Recommendation

9. For the reasons given above, the appeal scheme would not comply with the development plan, and I have been given no other compelling reason, taking into account other material considerations advanced, to deviate therefrom. I therefore recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

E Street

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

10. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR