
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 March 2025

by Juliet Rogers BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3635/W/24/3352919

Brookside, Acacia Road, Staines-upon-Thames, Surrey TW18 1BY

- 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 C Kondreddy against the decision of Spelthorne Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/01570/FUL.
 - The development proposed is a replacement dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council is currently preparing a new Spelthorne Local Plan 2022-2037 which is programmed to be adopted later in 2025. However, although my attention has been drawn to policies therein which are relevant to this appeal, there remains a high degree of uncertainty that these policies will be adopted in their current form. As such, the weight I attribute to them in my determination of this appeal is negligible.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located within a residential area comprising a variety of house types and scales such that no one form or architectural style dominates its character. However, comprising a detached bungalow, the appeal site forms part of a row of several detached bungalows with similar architectural features and which, when viewed from the front, are modest in size. Despite the presence of two and three storey dwellings further along Acacia Road and the variety within the wider area, the row of bungalows forms a discrete character area of its own.
5. The proposed development would replace the existing bungalow with a two-storey dwelling. It would be sited marginally back from the existing building line, thereby maintaining the spaciousness of the street scene established by the deep front gardens to the bungalows and the wide grassy verges alongside the unadopted road. Nonetheless, its overall height, roofscape bulk and increased width, in comparison with the existing dwelling, would create a form that dominates its immediate neighbours. The full height glazed entrance gable would further emphasise this difference in scale and bulk and would be a discordant feature

within the street scene and at the end of the vista along Glebe Road. It would not make a positive contribution to the character of the area as identified as an important consideration of a well-designed scheme in the Council's SPD¹.

6. Whilst there are examples of flat roofs nearby, these are located within areas with differing characteristics to the bungalows along Acacia Road, such as Glebe Road, and are largely found on extensions. Even if I were to conclude that flat roofs are accepted features of the street scene and do not harm the character and appearance of the area, this would not justify the scale of the proposed crown roof, particularly when combined with the bulk, height and width of the dwelling.
7. Although the previously approved scheme² is not dissimilar to the scheme before me in terms of its scale, it incorporated features within the façade which add interest to and break up the bulk of the elevation and the expanse of roofscape. Therefore, it would be less harmful to the character and appearance of the area than the appeal scheme. Furthermore, as it comprised two dwellings, the benefits which would be derived from it would be materially different to the proposed development. As such, even if I were to conclude that there was a theoretical possibility that this previously approved scheme could be constructed, it provides little support for the proposed development.
8. My attention has also been drawn to the higher ridgeline proposed within a previously submitted planning application³ comprising a block of four flats on the site. This would be more harmful than the proposed development due to the intensified use of the site. However, this previous application was also refused and the subsequent appeal⁴ dismissed due to similar concerns regarding the scale and bulk of the built form. Therefore, whilst such a scheme could be theoretically possible, the likelihood of it being implemented is low and the weight I attribute to it as a fallback scheme is similarly low.
9. I conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Policy EN1 of the Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document (the Core Strategy). This policy, amongst other things, requires development to respect and make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area. Such an approach is broadly consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework's (the Framework) objective to achieving well-designed places.
10. Although included on the decision notice, as Policy SP6 of the Core Strategy relates to maintaining and improving the quality of the environment, it is not determinative in my decision.

Other Matters

11. The proposed development would provide social and economic benefits from the demolition and construction works. However, due to the scale of the development, such benefits would be small and short-lived. It's modern construction, open plan layout and additional floorspace in comparison to the existing bungalow, would be beneficial to its future occupants. Given the appeal scheme would not result in a net gain in housing, any benefits to the local and wider economy, including public

¹ Design of Residential Extensions and New Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

² Council Ref: 19/01065/FUL, dated 15 October 2019

³ Council Ref: 20/00872/FUL, dated 25 September 2020

⁴ Appeal Ref: APP/Z3635/W/20/3265624, dated 4 June 2021

finances, from its occupation would be minimal. I have limited substantive evidence before me which demonstrates that the proposed development would lead to significant environmental benefits. As a result, I attribute a small amount of weight to the social, economic and environmental benefits which would be derived from the proposed development.

12. Even if I were to conclude that the proposed development would not harm the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring dwellings this, in itself, does not support the approval of an otherwise harmful development.
13. The evidence before me indicates that the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites in accordance with the Framework's objective of significantly boosting the supply of housing. The Council's Statement of Housing Land Supply, dated March 2024, indicates that a 3.8-year supply can be demonstrated. However, although the appeal site is not located within a protected area and the proposed development would result in additional residential floorspace, it would not lead to a net gain of housing units. Nor would it make a positive contribution to the Council's supply of deliverable housing sites. Consequently, the proposed development does not trigger the Framework's presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out at paragraph 11d.

Conclusion

14. I conclude that the proposed development is contrary to the development plan as a whole and material considerations do not indicate that the proposed development should be determined other than in accordance with it. For the reasons set out above, having had regard to all relevant matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Juliet Rogers

INSPECTOR