
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 March 2025

by Graham Wraight BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/X3540/W/24/3350420

Land rear of 73, 75 and 77 High Road, Trimley St Mary, Suffolk IP11 0TA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Messrs S and L Peters against the decision of East Suffolk Council.
 - The application Ref is DC/24/0964/OUT.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a chalet bungalow.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The application is submitted in outline form with all matters reserved for later consideration. Therefore, whilst a plan has been submitted suggesting how a dwelling could be accommodated on the site, this has been provided for indicative purposes only.
3. The Council has confirmed that it has received a direct payment which meets the requirements of the Suffolk Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS). As such it considers that this addresses reason for refusal 3. Accordingly, I have not considered this matter further in my assessment of the appeal.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - (i) parking and highway safety;
 - (ii) flood risk;
 - (iii) the character and appearance of the area; and
 - (iv) the living conditions of future and existing occupants, with particular regard to overlooking.

Reasons

Parking and highway safety

5. The appeal site provides parking for the properties at 73, 75 and 77 High Road which is accessed from Addington Road, albeit there is currently not a dropped kerb serving No 73. The ability for those dwellings to park vehicles here would be lost as a result of the appeal proposal and it is instead stated that alternative on-

street parking would be available in the surrounding area, including on High Road. There is a cycle lane running alongside High Road, but no evident parking restrictions.

6. At the time of my visit during the afternoon of a weekday, some on-street parking was available on Addington Road and the adjoining roads, Kingsbury Road and Station Road. However, a number of representations from interested parties and that from the Highway Authority (HA) all refer to existing parking stress on these roads. At times when people are less likely to be away from their homes, such as in the evenings or weekends, it would therefore seem entirely possible that on-street parking is at more of a premium than I observed. There is nothing substantive before me to demonstrate that these roads do not routinely experience parking stress at those times.
7. Space was also available to park on High Road at the time of my visit but, again, there are no details as to what, if any, parking pressures exist along that road at other times. Furthermore, a great number of vehicles which were parked along both sides of High Road were parked either partly, or fully, on the pavement, thus providing an obstruction for pedestrians using those footways.
8. There is, therefore, no comfort provided with the submissions that the surrounding area can absorb the displaced parking of vehicles that would result from the appeal proposal. If such parking cannot be absorbed, it is likely that this would lead to parking in a way which obstructs the efficient operation of the public highway and therefore which results in an unacceptable impact on highway safety. In addition, it has not been shown that it is possible to park vehicles on High Road in a way which does not obstruct pedestrian movements or the movements of vehicles along the highway, which too has the potential to have an unacceptable impact on highway safety.
9. I acknowledge that the appeal dwellings may not have been provided with off-street parking when built if they pre-dated the laying out of Addington Road. However, they have parking now and my assessment must be based on the impact that the proposal before me would have. Whilst there would be one less dropped kerb outside the appeal site as a result of the proposal, this does not address the matters relating to parking on High Road, where it is more probable that residents of Nos 73, 75 and 77 would seek to park for reasons of convenience.
10. The off-street parking provision to serve the proposed new dwelling is also questioned by the HA. However, there is scope for discussion as to the size of the dwelling in terms of the number of bedrooms and the number of parking spaces to be provided at reserved matters stage. The appeal site further appears to have good access to public transport, which the HA accepts could be a relevant consideration in terms of the required parking provision for a new dwelling.
11. In conclusion, it has not been shown that the proposed development would not cause an unacceptable impact on highway safety as a result of parking stress in the area. Consequently, the proposal fails to show accordance with Policy SCLP7.2 of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan 2020 (LP) which seeks to provide an appropriate parking provision and to reduce conflict between road users.

Flood risk

12. Addington Road and parts of its surrounding area are shown on Environmental Agency mapping as at risk of surface water flooding. The planning application was not accompanied by a flood risk assessment and the extract of the flood map provided by the appellant is inconclusive as to whether the extent of the flood risk extends onto the appeal site itself. The Development Site Screening Report does however state that a low risk of surface water flooding has been identified on site.
13. Therefore, it cannot be established whether a proposed dwelling on the appeal site would be at an identified risk from surface water flooding or to what degree any risk may be quantified at. Furthermore, no assessment is available as to whether such a new dwelling would impact on surface water flood risk in the area adjacent to the appeal site.
14. In conclusion, the proposal fails to demonstrate that it would accord with Policy SCLP9.5 where it requires that developments should be safe, resilient and should not increase flood risk elsewhere.

Character and appearance

15. The proposed dwelling would face onto Addington Road. This is a road of mixed character in terms of not only the design, scale and age of the dwellings but in their positions relative to the public highway. On the north side of the road plots predominantly extend the full distance between High Road and Addington Road and contain only a single dwelling which faces one of the roads, with its curtilage extending up to the other. There are however exceptions at the two ends of Addington Road, where dwellings are back to back with those on High Road. Elsewhere the Addington Road street scene is populated with a number of garages which serve the dwellings on High Road. Collectively, these factors mean that there is little visual coherence in the street scene along Addington Road.
16. In this context, the addition of a chalet bungalow would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. There is an existing bungalow on the same side of Addington Road, along with the aforementioned garages, and therefore the proposed dwelling would not be out of keeping with the scale of other development in the vicinity. Although curtilages of the dwellings to either side of the appeal site extend all the way back to Addington Road their gardens do not, and they have parking areas and/or garages on the street frontage. But in any event, it is not uncommon in the existing street scene that dwellings fronting this side of Addington Road are not next to another dwelling. The back to back nature of the proposal would also not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area, as this is already an arrangement present on the road.
17. For these reasons, I conclude that a new dwelling could be incorporated into the street scene without resulting in harm to the character and appearance of the area. As a result, the proposal would accord with Policy SCLP5.7 of the LP where it seeks to ensure that infill and garden development does not result in harm to the street scene or character of the area.

Living conditions

18. The existing dwellings on High Road that are behind the appeal site have first floor windows in their rear elevations, including some in their outriggers which appear to

be clear glazed and thus from which vision out would be possible. However, the submissions made suggest that the distances which could be retained between the nearest existing first floor windows and the appeal site boundary would be typical of separation distances expected in an urban area. As such, although there would be some overlooking possible from existing properties into the rear garden of a dwelling on the appeal site, the separation would ensure that acceptable living conditions could be provided for future occupants.

19. Whilst it is suggested that the proposed dwelling would come forward as a one and a half storey dwelling at reserved matters stage, it would be possible to design such a dwelling so that any first floor windows in its rear elevation served non-habitable rooms where obscure glazing with only top-opening window lights could be used. This would ensure that there would not be any harmful overlooking possible onto existing dwellings.
20. Therefore, I find that a dwelling on the appeal site could be accommodated in a way that would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants, and not cause harm to those of existing occupants. The proposal would therefore accord with Policies SCLP5.7 and SCLP11.2 of the LP where they seek to protect the living conditions of existing and future occupants of dwellings.

Other Considerations

21. The proposal would deliver one new dwelling, which would make a contribution to the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes which is set out in the Framework. It would do so on a site that is close to existing services and facilities and which has good access to public transport, making an efficient use of land. There would also be benefits arising through the spending of future residents. Due to the quantum of development proposed, these are considerations which collectively carry moderate weight in favour of the proposed development.

Planning Balance & Conclusion

22. I am satisfied that a new dwelling could be accommodated on the appeal site in a manner that would not give rise to harm to the character and appearance of the area, and which would provide acceptable living conditions for existing and future occupants. However, it has not been demonstrated that the loss of existing parking spaces would not give rise to an unacceptable impact on highway safety or that any surface water flood risk has been addressed. The proposal therefore fails to accord with the development plan taken as a whole.
23. The benefits of the development carry moderate weight in favour of the proposal, but they do not outweigh the failure to accord with the development plan. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

Graham Wraight

INSPECTOR