



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 July 2025

by Chris Couper BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W2845/W/25/3362162

184 Towcester Road, Northampton, West Northamptonshire NN4 8LW

- 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 Mr and Mrs P Emery against the decision of West Northamptonshire Council.
 - The application Ref is 2023/7913/OUT.
 - The proposed development is described as a two storey dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The application was made in outline, with access, layout and scale to be considered at this stage, and with landscaping and appearance reserved for future consideration. I have dealt with the appeal on this basis, and where proposed plan no. 35-23-01 A shows details of landscaping, I have dealt with it as indicative only.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area; and
 - whether the proposal would include appropriate crime prevention measures.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. In common with most of the properties along this stretch of Towcester Road, the bungalow at No 184 is located towards the front of the plot, with a long garden to the rear. Although those gardens and the vegetation within them are not prominent in the streetscene, they provide a largely undeveloped backdrop to the houses, and are clearly visible from them. They therefore give the area a spacious and verdant character.
5. As a result of this scheme, the host's rear garden would be partitioned, and a two storey dwelling would be erected on its rear section. The dwelling would be accessed from Grassland Way via an existing track, the first section of which would be finished in tarmac. The properties on Grassland Way are typically two storeys high and arranged fairly close to the highway, or are set back slightly from it in small groups set around a parking area. The plot sizes here are much smaller.

6. In the context of the area, the siting of the proposed dwelling well back from the highway, and behind the houses on Towcester Road, would be an anomaly. The scheme's layout would be incongruous and unrelated to the established pattern of development on both Towcester Road and Grassland Way. Given the proposed dwelling's two storey scale, the harm that siting and layout would cause would be clearly visible from nearby properties and their gardens.
7. The scheme would also significantly diminish the area's locally distinctive sense of spaciousness, particularly as, having regard to paragraphs 9.6 and 9.7 of the Council's delegated report, the host property's plot would be relatively short compared to the prevailing plot sizes along this stretch of Towcester Road.
8. For these reasons, the scheme's siting and layout would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area, and it would conflict with Policy Q1 of Northampton Local Plan Part 2 (2011 -2029) (2023) ('NLP'). Amongst other things, and in general terms, this requires development to promote and contribute to good placemaking through high quality design, which encourages a strong, locally distinctive sense of place, by responding to and enhancing the townscape's characteristics.
9. It would also conflict with the requirement for good design, which is sympathetic to local character, at part 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 ('Framework').

Crime prevention

10. NLP Policy Q1 also sets out at Part Bi that new development shall be designed to have full regard to the need for security and crime prevention, with crime prevention measures incorporated into the site layout and building design.
11. Given the scheme's layout, with the proposed dwelling in a fairly secluded and well-vegetated location to the rear of other buildings, the occupants would not benefit from the natural surveillance typically afforded to dwellings located closer to neighbouring houses or to the highway.
12. However, as pointed out by the appellants, the proposed dwelling would introduce some natural surveillance where there is currently very little, and it could thereby help to reduce crime in the area, or the fear of it. Additionally, as the application was made in outline, I have no details of the dwelling's appearance, and security features could be incorporated at reserved matters stage as part of the building's design.
13. I am therefore satisfied that, on this issue, the scheme would not conflict with the stance in NLP Policy Q1, and Policy S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) (2014), to have regard to, and incorporate, appropriate security and crime prevention measures. Neither would it conflict with the Framework's stance at paragraph 135 f) to create places that are safe, where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life, or community cohesion and resilience.
14. NLP Policy Q2 does not refer specifically to crime prevention, but the scheme would not conflict with its general stance on ensuring a high standard of amenity for future occupiers.

Conclusion

15. Summing up, I have found that the proposal would not conflict with policies which seek to ensure that appropriate crime prevention measures are incorporated into development proposals, but that its siting and layout would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area.
16. Consequently, having regard to all other matters raised, including representations by interested parties, the appeal is dismissed.

Chris Couper

INSPECTOR