



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 November 2025

by **L Francis BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/F3545/W/25/3372340

11 Clarendale Estate, Great Bradley, Suffolk CB8 9LN

- 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 Ms J Whittaker against the decision of West Suffolk Council.
 - The application Ref is DC/25/0168/FUL.
 - The development proposed is a new dwelling on land within the curtilage of 11 Clarendale Estate.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the appeal proposal on:
 - the character and appearance of the area; and,
 - the living conditions of future occupiers with regard to privacy.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. Clarendale Estate comprises an estate of mostly detached 20th Century 2 storey houses. The focal point of the estate is a large green space surrounded by a footpath, and housing facing directly onto it. Houses are set close together, regularly spaced, with front and rear gardens. The area's verdant, open character is derived largely from the central green and the substantial grassed areas to either side of the highway when entering Clarendale Estate from Matthews Lane. The front boundary treatments are generally low or open, which also contribute to the sense of openness.
4. The appeal site is a triangular area of garden land to the side of 11 Clarendale Estate which was used in connection with the host property. The prominent position of the appeal site relative to the central green and highway significantly contributes to the sense of openness in the vicinity.
5. The appeal proposal is for a 2-storey, 2 bedroomed house. The rear parking area would be accessed via a crossover from the highway and 2 grassed garden areas are shown to either side of the house.
6. The dwelling would be positioned centrally within its plot. Although this positioning would assist in maintaining a degree of openness to the side of No.11, it would also result in the dwelling being set back from the adjacent dwellings surrounding

the central green. This would weaken the otherwise consistent building line around this section of the green. The dwelling would also sit considerably closer to the highway at the rear than the adjacent properties. Taken together, the position of the dwelling within its plot, as well as relative to the surrounding pattern of development, would result in an incongruous appearance, at odds with the established street scene and prevailing pattern of development. The building would appear as a cramped form of development in terms of its scale relative to the plot size and configuration.

7. Given the prominent position of the appeal site and the contribution it makes to the open and verdant character of the surroundings, the appeal proposal would harmfully erode the open character of the estate. My attention has been drawn to the high hedges that surround the northern part of the site, which would offer some screening to views of the dwelling from the north, although the built development and consequent loss of openness would still be discernible. The high hedge would not mitigate other views, particularly from the central green and from the highway to the rear.
8. The fenestration pattern, along with the large expanses of brickwork with no fenestration or detail, would give the dwelling a rather unbalanced appearance and would not result in a detailed design which would sit comfortably with the surrounding context. Although the materials would reflect the established character of the area, this would not overcome the harm I have identified arising from the detailed design of the elevations.
9. For the reasons outlined above, the appeal proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with Policy LP9 of the West Suffolk Local Plan 2024-2041, adopted 2025 (Local Plan). Amongst other things, the policy states that development proposals should maintain or create a sense of place and have regard to local context and not involve the loss of gardens and important open, green or landscaped areas which make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of a settlement.

Living Conditions

10. The triangular garden area to the south end of the appeal site would be overlooked by a 1st floor window of No. 11. I acknowledge that across the estate, due to the proximity of the houses, gardens would be visible from neighbouring upper floor windows, but this would generally be an oblique view. However, due to the position of the dwelling within the plot, relative to the window, the overlooking would be direct, resulting in a harmful loss of privacy to the occupiers of the proposed dwelling. The perception of being overlooked would be intensified due to the modest size of the garden.
11. Although there would be an alternative garden area to the very north of the appeal site, this would be significantly smaller than the main garden, it would be north facing and would be surrounded by the high retained hedges. Consequently, it would be a reasonable assumption that this would not be as appealing for everyday use as the larger garden area to the south side of the site. The presence of the alternative space to the north would not be sufficient to mitigate the loss of privacy to the primary garden area. There would also be amenity space offered by the central green, though due to its communal nature I do not consider it would mitigate the loss of privacy to the main garden area.

12. In conclusion on this issue therefore, the proposal would result in a harmful loss of privacy to future occupiers of the dwelling. This would conflict with Policies SP4 and LP9 of the Local Plan insofar as they seek to ensure that the amenity of residents and users is protected, and new development provides adequate privacy, amongst other things.

Planning Balance

13. Set against the harm identified, the proposal would deliver a net gain of one new dwelling. The scheme would be an efficient use of land in a sustainable location. It would support the Government's aim of significantly boosting the supply of homes. However, the addition of a single dwelling would provide a limited contribution in this context and I attach limited weight to this benefit. There would be temporary and ongoing economic benefits from the development through construction and use of local shops and services, but given the single additional dwelling, those benefits would be limited. I note the proposal would achieve the mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, to which I attach moderate weight as a benefit.
14. My attention has been drawn to the scheme's compliance with other policies within the development plan. The Council acknowledge that the proposal would be acceptable with regard to highway safety, parking, sustainability, ecology and biodiversity, accessibility, layout and room sizes. I have no substantive evidence before me which would lead me to disagree. These matters weigh neither for nor against the scheme in the planning balance.
15. As set out above, the benefits associated with a single dwelling would be relatively small. The harm I have identified to the character and appearance of the area and to the living conditions of future occupiers outweighs the identified benefits.

Conclusion

16. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

L Francis

INSPECTOR