
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 November 2017

by Susan Ashworth BA (Hons) BPL MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 28th December 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/R4408/W/17/3182271

52 Kensington Road, Old Town, Barnsley S75 2SS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Rita Bradbury against the decision of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2016/1401, dated 8 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 3 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is a detached dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The proposal is for the erection of a two-storey detached house within the curtilage of 52 Kensington Road on a hard-surfaced area which had once been intended to form part of a new road. The proposed dwelling would be a modest 'L' shaped property with a single storey element at the front. Side facing windows at No 52 would be blocked up and existing parking space relocated.
4. Policy CSP29 of the Barnsley Local Development Framework Adopted Core Strategy 2011 requires, amongst other things, that development should respect and enhance townscape character including the scale, layout, building styles and materials of the built form. This reflected Policy H8D of the Barnsley Unitary Development Plan 2000 which requires that new development does not result in harm to the local environment.
5. The area surrounding the site is predominantly residential in character. To the east of the site, along Kensington Road, dwellings generally comprise substantial detached and semi-detached properties, and some modern blocks of flats. Buildings, which are of a predominantly traditional appearance, are generally of a robust form and massing and are set on definitive building lines. This, along with the limited pallet of external materials and rhythm of the buildings in the street scene, contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area. No 54, a dormer bungalow, is an exception to this

pattern, although being located at the rear of the appeal site it has a limited visual impact on the area.

6. To the west, the pattern of development is less well defined and includes open space and garages fronting the highway. Nevertheless, given its siting in close proximity to No 52 and its position lower down the hill, the development would be seen in the context of development to the east as set out above. The development would be particularly prominent from the junction of Kensington Road and Salisbury Street opposite.
7. The site is an irregularly shaped plot of land which narrows towards the front. The main two storey element of the proposed house would be set back into the site with a part two, part single storey projecting element at the front. In that respect the development would not reflect the predominant pattern of development in terms of the building line or the robust form and massing of neighbouring development. Moreover, the dwelling would be significantly narrower than other properties in the area and given the limited width of the plot the development would appear cramped on its plot. As such the development would appear as an anomaly in the street scene. The provision of parking space at the front of the dwelling, would further add to its incongruity. For these reasons taken together, the proposal would not respect or enhance townscape character.
8. I acknowledge that the external materials of the development would reflect its context and that the dwelling would be a similar height to No 52. Nevertheless, in themselves these matters are insufficient to outweigh the harm identified. I have also taken into consideration the view of the appellant that the site constitutes brownfield land and I acknowledge that the site lies in a sustainable location. However, the National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and, at paragraph 60, states that it is proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.
9. For the above reasons, I conclude on this issue that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and as such would be contrary to Policies CSP29 and H8D as set out above.

Other Matters

10. I have taken into consideration the comments of the neighbouring resident at No 54. However, there is no evidence to suggest that any essential services could not be re-routed if permission had been allowed. Although I recognise that the development would face the side of No 54, I am satisfied that given the distances involved the proposal would not result in undue harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of that property.
11. I have noted the appellant's claim that inconsistent advice was provided by the Council. This is a matter for the Council and, given that it is incumbent on me to determine the appeal on the merits of the case, has no bearing on my decision.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above and taking into account all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

S Ashworth

INSPECTOR