



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 March 2022

by Helen Smith BSc (Hons) MSc MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: Monday 28 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/L3245/W/21/3285829

62 Longden Road, Shrewsbury SY3 7HG

- 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 Mr A Rutter (A J Rutter Limited) against the decision of Shropshire Council.
 - The application Ref 21/03296/FUL, dated 30 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 14 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is erection of 2 No 4 bedroom detached houses with on-site car parking following demolition of existing commercial premises.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located on Longden Road and is currently occupied by a commercial unit. Longden Road consists of mature residential properties with a mix of styles that are predominately two-storey. The rear of the site is adjacent to the Rad Brook Valley, which is characterised by sloping fields and pockets of woodland.
4. The proposed dwellings would be set back further from the street frontage than the neighbouring dwellings, whose front elevations are all at a similar distance from the road itself. Whilst the existing commercial unit is also set back, the proposed dwellings would nonetheless be viewed in the context of the existing neighbouring dwellings. As a result of its positioning being further away from the street frontage, the proposed dwellings would appear as an incongruous feature within the street scene and would not maintain the uniform building line which characterises the area.
5. Furthermore, the scale, height and massing of the proposed dwellings would appear dominant and highly visible within the street scene. This is because the proposed three-storey dwellings would be taller than the adjacent neighbouring dwellings, with a roofline protruding above them. In addition, the proposal would be closer to the side boundary of 64 Longden Road, and therefore wider than the existing commercial unit. The proposal's ridge height would also be set higher than the existing commercial unit which would result in the front elevations appearing more prominent than the existing building on site.

6. The size and position of the proposal would appear cramped on site with very small separation distances between the two proposed dwellings and the neighbouring side boundaries. This would be of visual detriment to the street scene thereby causing unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. The extent of the hardstanding driveway to the front of the proposed dwellings would add to this harm.
7. In addition, the depth of the proposed dwellings would extend further back into the site than the adjacent dwellings. Although the existing commercial property also extends further back into the site, its height is lower, and its width is narrower than the proposal before me.
8. I note that the ground level to the rear of the site changes quite dramatically as it slopes down towards the rear boundary. However, this is also true of the neighbours' properties that have a building line closer to the street frontage.
9. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the proposed development would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposal fails to accord with Policy CS6 of Shropshire Council's Core Strategy (2011), which seeks to ensure development is appropriate in scale and mass and takes account of the local context and character. The proposal also fails to accord with Policy MD2 of Shropshire Council's Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan (2015), which seeks to ensure development responds appropriately to the form and layout of existing development, including building heights, lines and scale. It would also fail to accord with the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

10. The proposal would replace a commercial unit constructed of part brick/part industrial sheeting that generates vehicular movements within a residential area. However, this benefit would not outweigh the harm identified from the proposal to the character and appearance of the area.
11. The appellant claims that the siting of the proposed dwellings minimises the impact on the neighbouring properties side windows. However, I have found the proposal to be incongruous in appearance. During my site visit, I also observed that some of the neighbour's side windows are obscure glazed.
12. Although objections have not been received from the Town Council or the neighbours, the lack of objections is a neutral matter and certainly does not outweigh the harm that has been found.
13. The appellant claims that the proposal would make effective use of a brownfield site in an accessible location. However, this does not negate the conflict that has been identified with the development plan.
14. The site is adjacent to the Shrewsbury Conservation Area (CA). This was not a contentious matter for the Council and taking into account my observations on site, the proposed development would have a neutral effect on the setting of the CA. However, this neutral effect does not weigh in favour of the proposal.

Conclusion

15. The proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations worthy of sufficient weight that would indicate a decision other than in accordance with it. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

Helen Smith

INSPECTOR