
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 February 2015

by Les Greenwood MRTPI

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

Decision date: 26 March 2015

Appeal Ref: APP/A2525/A/14/2228014

**Land adjacent to 33A Branches Lane, Holbeach, Spalding, Lincolnshire
PE12 7BE**

- 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 and Mrs P Smith against the decision of South Holland District Council.
 - The application Ref H05-0481-14, dated 4 June 2014, was refused by notice dated 11 August 2014.
 - The development proposed is a bungalow and a detached garage.
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Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal.

Main issues

2. The main issues are the effects of the proposal on:
 - i) the character and appearance of the local area; and
 - ii) living conditions at neighbouring houses, in terms of privacy, noise and disturbance.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is within a ribbon of residential development near the edge of the town of Holbeach, with open fields opposite and to the rear. These properties typically have long rear gardens and the opportunity has been taken in several places to site new dwellings behind the street frontage. One of these is the chalet bungalow at No 33A, which sits well to the rear of the frontage bungalow at No 33, with access via a shared drive. The proposal is to insert a new 2 bedroom bungalow and a detached garage between these 2 dwellings, replacing an existing timber shed and sharing the same drive.
 4. The existing, relatively low density of housing is appropriate to this edge of town location. Although the area is characterised by a degree of backland development in tandem arrangements (as at Nos 33 and 33A), I saw no other examples where 2 new properties have been created behind a frontage
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property, creating a line of 3 as is proposed here. The proposed new buildings would be much larger than the existing shed and would be cramped in this position, taking up a large proportion of the small plot and leaving very little amenity space. The proposal would also substantively intensify the use of the site, by introducing new residents and their vehicles. I appreciate that the development would largely be screened from view from the street, but the proposal would nevertheless significantly alter the more spacious character of the site and surroundings.

5. The appellant has drawn my attention to a substantial new 2 storey house which has recently been permitted and built nearby. That house has not, however, created a situation similar to the one proposed here. I have considered this case on its own merits.
6. I conclude that the proposal would overdevelop the site, harming the rural character and appearance of the local area. It therefore conflicts with the aims of South Holland Local Plan (LP) Policies SG14 and HS4, to ensure that new development is in character with the area and makes a positive contribution to the architectural and visual quality of its surroundings. This aligns with the National Planning Policy Framework's (NPPF's) emphasis on securing high quality design.

Living conditions

7. The proposed bungalow would be very close to existing bungalows at Nos 33 and 29, but this would only be a single storey dwelling so any overlooking could easily be limited by boundary fencing. The proposed new rear patio area's close proximity to neighbours would not be particularly unusual and normal residential use here should not cause significant disturbance.
8. The use of the shared drive would intensify and this does pass close by the bungalows at Nos 33 and 35. However, the proposed additional turning and parking area would be set well away from those buildings and the amount of extra traffic created would be minor.
9. The Council has not raised any concerns in regard to impacts on neighbours' light and outlook. I agree that the proposal would not significantly impact these matters and conclude that the proposal would not unduly affect living conditions at neighbouring properties. It therefore accords in this respect with the aim of LP Policies SG14 and SG17, to ensure that development does not cause material harm to residential amenity, in line with the NPPF's aim to secure a good standard of amenity for all occupants of land and buildings. The Council has also cited LP Policy HS4 here, but I see no direct relevance.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

Les Greenwood

INSPECTOR