
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 October 2016

by A A Phillips BA(Hons) DipTP MTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 1 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/J2373/W/16/3152174
138 Stony Hill Avenue, Blackpool FY4 1PW

- 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 Moore against the decision of Blackpool Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 15/0394, dated 19 June 2015, was refused by notice dated 9 February 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of 8 two storey semi-detached dwelling houses and 1 detached bungalow with associated access road, car parking, landscaping and boundary treatment following demolition of the existing building.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I note that the original proposal sought planning permission for the demolition of a house and the erection of ten dwelling houses. However, during the course of the application the proposal was revised and the description in the banner heading reflects the revised scheme and is taken from the appellant's appeal form.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to a large plot of land on Stony Hill Avenue, which is a residential street in Blackpool. It currently contains a large L-shaped two storey rendered building with associated car park area and ancillary space which was formerly used as a family centre. It is situated at the edge of a mainly residential area. The adjacent land and buildings off Squires Gate Lane has a tyre centre and car wash.
 5. The proposal would be seen very much in the context of the established form of two storey gable fronted hipped roof semi-detached properties along Stony Hill Avenue. The attractive tree lined avenue has a uniform pattern of residential properties built mainly in red brick with painted stone sills, headers and mullions. Properties are separated from the street by a grass verge containing mature trees, a pavement, low boundary walls and landscaped
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gardens and driveways. Properties generally have long back gardens. There is a regular and uniform spacing between the pairs of properties which provides a strong and attractive regular pattern of residential development along the street.

6. The existing building is a notable exception to this regular pattern of development towards the end of the street where it meets Squires Gate Lane.
7. The proposed residential development comprises three pairs of two storey semi-detached houses across the frontage of Stony Hill Avenue. The central pair has been designed to have a site access road running beneath the central section. To the rear of the three pairs of semi-detached houses is another pair of two storey semi-detached houses and a bungalow.
8. Planning permission has previously been granted for the development of six properties along the street frontage of the site. As such, the principle of residential development on this site has been accepted.
9. The properties would have small rear private amenity spaces and the rear plots would be situated close to the rear of the front pairs of houses. As a consequence, the overall form and layout of the development appears cramped and over-intensive in relation to the established pattern of development in the locality. Although the density of development complies with the range of between 30-50 dwellings per hectare as set out in Policy HN7 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 Adopted June 2006 (the LP), the explanatory text to that policy goes on to acknowledge that there may be some instances where other factors such as design and site configuration constraints outweigh density considerations.
10. The intensive proposed development with three properties to the rear of the plots fronting onto Stony Hill Avenue is out of character with the area as it introduces a form and layout which is at odds with its surroundings and, in particular, the strong established form of residential development on Stony Hill Avenue.
11. Furthermore, as part of the proposed layout an arched undercroft entrance feature with access road to serve the rear properties are proposed. These are integral to facilitating the intensive use of the site and the backland development. As such, they are out of keeping with the design and appearance of residential development in the locality and harmful to its character.
12. I conclude that as a result of the over-intensive use of the site and the consequential introduction of inappropriate design and layout elements the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. As such it is in conflict with the design and layout objectives of Policies LQ2 and HN7 of the LP, Policies CS7 and CS12 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2012 – 2027) Adopted January 2016 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other matters

13. I have noted that the appellant engaged in discussions with the local planning authority at pre-application stage and that the proposal has been amended to take account of concerns raised during the application process. However, pre-

application advice is not binding and I am required to assess the proposal in front of me. As such, I have determined this appeal on its own merits.

14. I am aware of the extensive objections to the scheme from local residents. As well as concerns relating to the design, layout and appearance of the proposal and its effect on the character and appearance of the area a number of other concerns have been raised. These include car parking and highways safety, privacy, overlooking, loss of trees, noise and disturbance, light and precedent. However, in considering the current appeal these matters have not been determinant.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above and taking account of all other matters I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

Alastair Phillips

INSPECTOR