



Penderfyniad ar yr Apêl

Ymweliad â safle a wnaed ar 20/01/20

gan **C MacFarlane BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI**

Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru

Dyddiad: 19.02.2020

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20/01/20

by **C MacFarlane BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Date: 19.02.2020

Appeal Ref: APP/H6955/A/19/3241047

Site address: 46 Beechley Road, Wrexham LL13 7BA

The Welsh Ministers have transferred the authority to decide this appeal to me as the appointed Inspector.

- 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 Andrew Shield against the decision of Wrexham County Borough Council.
 - The application Ref WRO P/2019/0376, dated 16 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 4 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is increased occupancy of existing HMO from 6 bedrooms 6 occupants to 6 bedrooms 8 occupants to allow for 2 couples to share.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for increased occupancy of existing HMO from 6 bedrooms 6 occupants to 6 bedrooms 8 occupants to allow for 2 couples to share at 46 Beechley Road, Wrexham LL13 7BA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref WRO P/2019/0376, dated 16 May 2019, subject to the following condition:
 - 1) The development shall begin not later than five years from the date of this decision.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on highway safety, with regard to parking.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two-storey mid-terrace dwelling located within a predominantly residential area. The majority of parking provision in the immediate area is on-street, and on both sides of Beechley Road, with only a small number of properties having off-street spaces. The roads in the surrounding area are not subject to any form of formal parking restriction, with the exception of double yellow lines around junction corners and H-bar markings across driveway accesses.
 4. The proposal would allow for an additional 2 occupants within the property and would not result in any internal or external changes to the dwelling. There is no parking provision within the curtilage of the property and residents are therefore reliant on on-
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street parking spaces. In accordance with the Council's adopted Local Planning Guidance Note No. 16 'Parking Standards' (LPG16), the maximum number of parking spaces that would be expected to be provided for a 6-bedroom HMO, would be 4 spaces. As the number of bedrooms is proposed to remain the same, there would therefore be no change in the provision required, when compared to the current situation, in respect of the standards set out in LPG16. I note however that the standards in LPG16 are determined on the number of bedrooms rather than bedspaces, and it would be reasonable to anticipate that an additional 2 residents could result in some increased parking demand beyond that generated by the existing number of residents.

5. There is reference to a 2018 parking survey carried out by the Council which shows that the levels of parking demand associated with HMOs, and levels of car ownership in rented properties generally, are relatively low. I note the appellant has also conducted his own survey which shows a low level of car ownership associated with HMOs. The Council's Officer report acknowledges that this is generally consistent with its 2018 survey. Although the Council questions the validity and reliability of the surveys, and I acknowledge that demand will fluctuate over time, shared accommodation is usually occupied by low income tenants who are less likely to own a car. I therefore consider the evidence provided to be indicative of the general level of parking demand expected from such properties.
6. The appeal property is located within walking distance of Wrexham town centre, where there is access to a range of services and public transport. As such, I consider it to be a sustainable location where residents would not necessarily be reliant on car ownership to meet their everyday needs. LPG16 recognises that in sustainable locations, it may be appropriate to provide fewer parking spaces, in recognition of the decreased reliance on car journeys. Taking into account the parking requirements of LPG16, the evidence of a generally low level of car ownership in HMOs, the sustainable location of the appeal property and the modest increase in the number of occupiers proposed, I consider that any additional parking demand would be marginal.
7. Representations from the community council and local residents indicate that the surrounding area experiences a high level of parking demand and, at the time of my visit, I observed a considerable number of vehicles parked along both sides of Beechley Road. Although an increase in parking demand can result in inappropriate parking and impede the flow of traffic, due to the marginal potential increase in demand and having regard to the unrestricted nature of parking in the surrounding roads, I conclude that the proposal would not cause significant harm to highway safety, with regard to parking. The proposal therefore complies with Policies GDP1 and T8 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011, which, amongst other things, seek to ensure development proposals have safe and convenient vehicle access and do not adversely affect road safety.

Other Matters

8. Comments have been made regarding the increase in HMOs and their impact on surrounding areas, however the property already operates as an HMO and would therefore not contribute to an increase in the number of such properties. Concerns have also been raised regarding noise, anti-social behaviour, waste collection and the appearance of the property. However, such issues are largely outside the control of the planning system and can be addressed through other mechanisms. The proposal would make adequate provision for external space, including bin storage, in line with the requirements of the Council's adopted Local Planning Guidance Note No. 5 'Houses in Multiple Occupation'.

9. In reaching my decision, I have considered the duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WBFG Act). I have taken into account the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act and consider that this decision is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives, as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, the appeal is allowed.

Claire MacFarlane

INSPECTOR