
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 February 2016

by D Boffin BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI Dip Bldg Cons (RICS) IHBC

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

Decision date: 26 February 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/X1735/W/15/3134698

Land adjacent to 50 Southfield Walk, Havant, Hampshire, PO9 4HY

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Oliver West of Vale Builders Southern Ltd against the decision of Havant Borough Council.
 - The application Ref APP/15/00510, dated 7 May 2015, was refused by notice dated 14 September 2015.
 - The development proposed is a 4 bed house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. For the purposes of clarity I have used the address as submitted on the appeal form in the banner heading.
3. The application was submitted in outline, with all detailed matters reserved. The appellant submitted plans with the application illustrating how the site could be developed with a 4 bedroom house. As the application is in outline the appellant is not tied to the detail shown on the plans. However, given that it shows how the proposed dwelling could be accommodated on the site, I have treated this as indicative of the appellant's intentions and have assessed the application on this basis.
4. A revised drawing No. PTL 1900/02A was submitted with the appeal to alter the parking layout. Such a revision is of a very minor nature such that the substance of the scheme has not changed. As a result I find that no party would be prejudiced by my consideration of its content. Therefore, I have determined the appeal taking into account the revised plan as an amendment to the original application submission.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are:
 - The effect on the character and appearance of the area;
 - The effect on living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers with particular regard to parking congestion.
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Reasons

Character and appearance

6. The appeal site is a grassed open area adjacent to a row of terraced dwellings. The general area around Southfield Walk is quite densely developed with terraced dwellings and apartment blocks giving it a somewhat hard, urban feel. In this context the appeal site and the other grassed open spaces between the blocks of dwellings together with the views out into the surrounding countryside and woodland convey a sense of space and help to soften the urban character. The appeal site makes a positive contribution to the surrounding area in the way it links to and complements other areas of open space in the immediate vicinity.
7. Due to the confines of the site the dwelling would be in close proximity to the side boundaries of the site and the garage to the front would be in line with adjacent garages. This would result in the dwelling visually reinforcing the hard urban feel of Southfield Walk and there would be little open space remaining around the proposed dwelling. As such, the softening effect of the open space would be substantially eroded.
8. The architectural style of the dwelling would reflect that of the adjacent dwellings. However, even though there would be a minimal gap the dwelling would be detached. Whereas the majority of dwellings in the area are terraced and as such there is uniformity to their design. Furthermore, the dwelling would be considerably wider and slightly deeper than the adjacent dwellings emphasising its detached status. As such the dwelling would be a prominent and incongruous element in this area.
9. Accordingly the proposal would be significantly harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would conflict with Policy CS16 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) (CS) which, amongst other things, seeks high quality design that responds to, draws inspiration from and respects local context.

Living Conditions

10. The dwellings adjacent to the site on Southfield Walk actually front Berrydown Road and their vehicular access is from that road. The amended plan submitted with the appeal shows two parking spaces and a single garage to the front of the site. However, the Council have stated that the dimensions of the garage or the smaller car parking space would not meet the recommended dimensions set out in the adopted Residential Car Parking and Cycle Provision Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD also recommends that 3 parking spaces should be provided for four bedroom dwellings.
11. As a consequence of the reduced size of the garage and the limited area for parking at the front of the dwelling the proposal would lead to some of the vehicles belonging to the prospective occupiers being parked in Berrydown Road.
12. On my site visit at 0900 I noted that even though each house has a garage, some with a drive to the side, there is a high demand for on-street parking. I acknowledge that levels of parking in the evening when residents return from work is likely to be higher. A large number of representations were made in relation to the planning application and the majority of these expressed

concerns about parking issues. The proposal would be likely to change the existing situation perceptibly from one where the existing residents accept the existing difficulties of finding a parking space within the context of good neighbourliness, to one where a degree of frustration and resentment would begin to upset the balance.

13. Accordingly, given the sensitivity of this location in terms of existing parking demands, I consider that the use would increase demand which is likely to result in increased competition for parking spaces and give rise to resentment and frustration between established residents and the occupiers of the proposed dwelling.
14. I conclude that the proposed development would be likely to cause unacceptable inconvenience to the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers with particular regard to parking congestion. The proposal would conflict with Policies CS16 and DM13 of the CS and guidance in the SPD. Policy CS16 among other things seeks high quality design that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbours and DM13 seeks to permit development where it provides car parking and cycle storage in accordance with the standards set out in the SPD.

Conclusion

15. In my determination of this appeal, I have had regard to the National Planning Policy Framework's presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 14). I acknowledge that there would be sustainability benefits associated with the proposal. Specifically, the appeal site is within the built up area of Havant where there is a range of services, facilities and employment opportunities available. One additional dwelling would be provided. However, I have found that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers and that harm outweighs the benefits associated with the scheme. I have taken into account all other matters raised. However none are sufficient to alter my overall conclusions. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

D. Boffin

INSPECTOR