

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 September, 2016

by S. J. Buckingham, BA (Hons) DipTP MSc MRTPI FSA

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

Decision date: 12TH October, 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/J3530/W/16/3150280

Endeavour, Main Road, Martlesham, Woodbridge, IP12 4SW

- 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 B Burrows against the decision of Suffolk Coastal District Council.
 - The application Ref DC/15/5086/FUL, dated 15 December, 2015 was refused by notice dated 8 February, 2016.
 - The development proposed is new dwelling with new vehicular access off Angela Close.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. Endeavour is a modest bungalow in a run of similar properties along Main Road, within the limits of Martlesham village. The residential area in which it sits includes generally modest bungalows and houses, relatively closely spaced, but nonetheless has an open and green character, created by the generous garden spaces to front and rear of the dwellings, wide verges and the presence of trees in streets and gardens.
 4. Endeavour and other dwellings along Main Road adjoin Angela Close at the rear boundary of their long back gardens. The south side of Angela Close is characterised by the boundary of these gardens, consisting of a long, unbroken run of high fences with a grass verge, supplemented in places by stretches of hedgerow. The area behind the appeal site is a wide grassed verge, containing a number of mature specimen trees. There is a short run of bungalows on the south side of Angela Close, set at the far end of the road and separated from the appeal site.
 5. The appeal dwelling would be inserted into the rear garden of Endeavour with a new access created from Angela Close. It would introduce a new dwelling on the south side of that road, where currently only garden spaces with some outhouses are visible over the boundary, and where the new access would interrupt the continuous boundary and verge. The dwelling would be
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separated by the width of two sizeable plots from the group of dwellings to the east with a frontage on the south side of Angela Close. This would be a sufficiently wide gap for it to not appear as a continuation of this run of dwellings, a separation emphasised by the trees lining the street at this point, notwithstanding that it would entail the removal of two of these trees. It would therefore appear as an anomalous and intrusive insertion into this otherwise secondary and greened frontage, which would be at odds with its existing character and appearance.

6. The insertion of a new house into the garden of Endeavour would entail the subdivision of the garden space, leaving rear gardens to both houses which would be conspicuously shorter than those of other houses in the vicinity along Main Road. Although the width of the appeal dwelling, and therefore the spaces to the sides, would be equivalent to those of others in the area, the rear garden spaces created would not be comparable, and, being visible from the street, from the host dwelling and from other adjoining properties, would create a cramped appearance to the proposal and to the host dwelling, which would conflict with the character and appearance of the area. It would not, either, complement the bungalows on the north side of Angela Close, which are set in reasonably generous and open front gardens.
7. A recently approved dwelling on the south side of Angela Close, close to the corner with Black Tiles Lane, and under construction at the time of visiting the site, was drawn to my attention as setting a precedent for new housing. It sits however in an unusually shaped site at some distance from the appeal site, and adjacent to the corner property, which in any case is orientated towards Black Tiles Lane. As a result it does not offer comparable circumstances to the appeal under consideration. It does not therefore cause me to alter my decision.
8. The Council asserts that it does have an identified five year deliverable housing supply and has submitted its Housing Land Supply Assessment 2016 - 2021. This was published after the appeal decision (Ref: APP/J3530/W/15/3011466) cited by the Appellant. Taking into account the contents of the Council's document, including its reasoning for basing the assessment on the CS figure of 7, 900 and the endorsement of that figure by the Local Plan Inspector, I am satisfied that it does now have an identified housing supply, and that paragraphs 14 and 49 of the Framework are not invoked.
9. I have taken into account the appellants' personal circumstances, and their desire to self-build a new and smaller dwelling, but do not find that this outweighs the harm I have identified.
10. The appeal proposal would therefore, by introducing an anomalous element into the south frontage of Angela Close and by creating an unduly cramped development, be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore, conflict with Policy DM7 of the Suffolk Coastal District Plan 2013, which seeks to restrict subdivision of plots to create additional housing units which result in a cramped form of development or which are out of character with the area and the street scene, and Policy DM21 which seeks proposals which relate well to their surroundings.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, and taking into account matters raised, I conclude therefore that the appeal should be dismissed.

S J Buckingham

INSPECTOR