

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 September 2016

by R Barrett BSc (Hons) MSc Dip UD Dip Hist Cons MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 17th October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1255/W/16/3150422

18 Cockerell Close, Poole, BH21 1XT

- 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 Wood against the decision of Poole Council.
 - The application Ref APP/16/00289/F, dated 18 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 21 April 2016.
 - The development proposed is 'construction of new self-contained dwelling to the land to the side of 18 Cockerell Close'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The appellant submitted revised plan No. 003B at appeal. As that plan is materially different to that determined as part of the planning application and as interested parties may not have had a chance to comment on it, I cannot be assured that it would not prejudice the interest of any third party. This would be the case even though such amendment was requested by the Council. I therefore have determined this appeal on the basis of the plans that were before the Council when it made its decision on the planning application.

Main Issues

3. The Council confirms that it has withdrawn its second reason for refusal relating to the effect of the appeal proposal on the Dorset Heathland Special Protection Area the Dorset Heaths Special Area of Conservation. The outstanding issues are therefore:
 - The effect of the appeal proposal on the character and appearance of the locality and on the safety of highway users.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal site includes a semi-detached property and the garden to its front side and rear. It is in a locality generally comprised of two storey properties in a residential estate layout. In this locality dwellings are mainly semi-detached and detached, and to a lesser extent terraced, of similar style, age, design and materials. Although some have been altered and extended over time this gives the locality a sense of cohesion. Properties are set back from the street frontage, have space between them and corner properties have larger plots, with space to one side. Together, even though there is some development on
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corner plots, the locality has a cohesive, spacious and green character and appearance. The appeal site, its corner location with a larger than average side garden, contributes to the character and appearance of the locality that I have identified.

5. The proposed development would take up most of the area of land to the side of the appeal dwelling, which would erode the spacious and green character of the locality. Further, it would sit close to the back edge of the pavement and its two storey form would appear cramped. It would unbalance the spacious entrance to the cul de sac of the existing corner plots (the appeal site and No. 50 opposite). Furthermore, it would sit significantly forward of the dwellings that would be located to its rear (Nos. 20-26). Even though those dwellings have a staggered layout, they have some space between them and the street. The appeal development would leave very limited space between its side elevation and the street and thereby would fail to respect the existing layout of the locality. There would be limited space for landscaping to soften its side elevation and for all of the above reasons, it would appear out of place and would jar in the street scene. I note that it is intended to landscape the appeal proposal to a high standard retaining existing hedgerows and bushes to the front. However, there would be little room at the side of the proposed house for landscaping to soften its impact on the street scene, sufficient to overcome my concern.
6. In coming to this conclusion, I have had regard to the developments nearby brought to my attention by the appellant. It is suggested that they are similar to the appeal development and planning decisions should be consistent. However, none replicate the circumstances of this appeal, in as much they are not additional two storey dwellings, on a corner plot with a similar relationship to surrounding properties and the street scene. I therefore attach very limited weight to them in coming to my decision.
7. I conclude that the appeal proposal would result in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the locality and would fail to accord with Poole Core Strategy (2009) (PCS) Policies PCS 5 and PCS 23. These, together, aim for residential development to exhibit a high standard of design, contribute positively to the character and function of Poole and preserve or enhance an area's residential character by contributing positively to the attributes that distinguish it.

Highway Safety

8. The Council raises concern regarding the proposed parking arrangement, although not stated as a reason for refusal. The appeal development would provide two parking spaces for the existing and proposed dwellings as shown on plan 003A. That provision would be low for the size of proposed dwelling that would be created and would be likely to lead to additional on street parking. As Cockerell Close is quite narrow and the appeal development is on a corner, this would be likely to reduce the safety of highway users, even though the appeal development would be in an accessible location and there is on street parking. Whilst I appreciate that the site could accommodate more parking to comply with the parking guidelines in Table 3 of the Parking and Highway Layout Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), such an amendment is not included in the appeal plans I am considering. Whilst this

matter would not be a reason for refusal alone, it adds to my concern for the harm that would arise as a result of this appeal development.

9. I conclude that the appeal development would be likely to reduce the safety of highway users. It would therefore fail to accord with Table 3 of SPD, PCS and SADMP Policy DM7, which, aims for new development proposals not to compromise highway safety.

Other Matters

10. I note that it is proposed to incorporate energy saving technologies and sustainable construction standards in the new build and it would be designed to accommodate people with different needs. It would also provide an additional unit of family accommodation in an accessible location. However, when taken together, these matters would not overcome the harm that I have identified.
11. I note that the appellant suggests that there are no adverse impacts of the scheme and certainly none which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. I have no substantive evidence to suggest that the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date. However, even if that were the case, in the circumstances of this appeal, I consider that the adverse impacts I have identified would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits, when assessed against the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework as a whole.

Conclusion

12. For the above reasons, and taking all other matters raised into consideration, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R. Barrett

INSPECTOR