

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 November 2016

by Jonathon Parsons MSc BSc(Hons) DipTP Cert(Urb) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 23 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/B1740/W/16/3154249

Land rear of 31 & 33 Bartram Road, Eling, Totton, Hampshire SO40 9JJ

- 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 R Matthews (R S Matthews Ltd) against the decision of New Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/10229, dated 18 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 14 April 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a detached 2 bedroom bungalow.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. There has been a recent legal judgement in relation to the Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) of 28 November 2014 and alterations to Planning Practice Guidance for affordable housing contributions on smaller-scale development. Consequently, the Council are not pursuing their reason for refusal based on the need for an affordable housing contribution. Based on the judgement and WMS, there is no requirement for a contribution.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a sub-divided plot at the far end of a pair of semi-detached dwellings 31 and 33 Bartram Road and has a roadside boundary onto Rose Road. It lies within an immediate area where there are long rear gardens of dwellings backing onto one another in Bartram Road and Fishers Road. Within these gardens, there are differently sized sheds, outbuildings and structures.
 5. The wider area is characterised by a pattern of blocks where housing has often been developed on all street frontages. However, in the vicinity of the appeal site, the Rose Road frontage has not been developed in this way. Despite boundary fences and vegetation, the long and largely undeveloped rear gardens were noticeable qualities which I saw on my site visit. These qualities contribute to a considerably spacious and open character and appearance which is attractive. A new bungalow has been built opposite the appeal site on
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Rose Road but this is an exception to this predominant character and appearance.

6. The appeal site's side of Rose Road comprises the flank elevations of dwellings at 31 Bartram Road and 43 Fishers Road, a mixture of close boarded fencing, garage and outbuilding structures, mixed hedging and planting. The addition of a dwelling would open up a section of this frontage and a fence adjacent to the pavement would be removed. However, the bungalow would be sited close to three boundaries of the site and although sited some distance back from the road, the intervening frontage would be extensively hard-surfaced to allow for the parking of two vehicles and a pedestrian access way. By reason of the extent of built development on the frontage, the plot would appear cramped in comparison with the more spacious and open nature of the surrounding area.
7. There would be a side garden to the proposed dwelling but this would be largely hidden from the streetscene by reason of an intervening area of a neighbour's garden. The bungalow would be a significant distance from properties in Bartram Road and Fishers Road but this does not address the consideration of the cramped nature of the dwelling by reason of its close proximity to boundaries and the overall extent of built development, including hard-surfacing, on the frontage.
8. My attention has been drawn to the new bungalow opposite. However, the frontage part of the appeal plot would be narrower in width and depth, and has a side garden sited back from the road. Therefore this development opposite would have a more spacious setting in comparison even taking into account the more backward position of the appeal dwelling. In any event, I have considered the appeal proposal on its particular planning merits.
9. In conclusion, the development would harm the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, the proposal would conflict with Policy CS2 of the New Forest District Council (Outside the National Park) Core Strategy (CS) 2009, which amongst other matters, requires new development to be well-designed to respect the character, identity and context of the area.
10. Under the National Planning Policy Framework, the proposal would make a limited contribution to the supply of housing. Such a contribution would not outweigh the harm the scheme would cause to the character and appearance of the area. In this regard, the Framework states that the government places great importance to the design of the built environment. By reason of its cramped nature, the proposal would not be good design and for these reasons, it would not be sustainable development.

Conclusion

11. In conclusion, the proposal would be contrary to the development plan. It would not be sustainable and there are no material considerations to outweigh the development plan conflict identified. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Jonathon Parsons

INSPECTOR