



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 March 2017

by Nick Fagan BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 12TH April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/A3655/W/16/3164479

4 Farnley, Goldsworth Park, Woking, Surrey GU21 3PZ

- 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 Giovanni Taibi against the decision of Woking Borough Council.
 - The application Ref PLAN/2016/0603, dated 17 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a two bedroom terraced house.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area and whether it would exacerbate a shortage of on-street parking in the local area.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. Goldsworth Park is a good example of a large open plan 1970s/80s suburban development, typified by large mature areas of landscaped open space and exhibiting good footpath links separate from principal highways. Front gardens are generally open in this part of the estate and the dwellings at Farley, a small cul-de-sac off Clifton Way, one of the main roads through the estate, are no exception.
 4. In front of the open gardens of the 11 dwellings at Farnley is a footpath, further landscaping and perpendicular street parking for approximately 14 cars. Diagonally off the south western end of the cul-de-sac is a terraced garage court of 11 individual garages, one for each of the dwellings.
 5. Off the opposite south east end of the cul-de-sac, between Nos 3 and 4, is a footpath that links Farnley to Bishops Wood including a generous area of treed public open space on its western side.
 6. The openness of this footpath link, particularly the way that the houses at Nos 3 and 4 are inset from it by their side gardens gives a pleasant spacious character to this part of the estate. Such linking footpaths are an inherent part
-

of the estate's design and a key part of its movement and accessibility hierarchy.

7. The proposed dwelling would not affect the footpath itself but it would significantly reduce the space between it and the nearest built development, which would compromise this key feature of openness next to the footpath.
8. The plot the new house would occupy would not be significantly narrower than that of the two existing mid-terrace houses in this terrace. But its front garden would be noticeably smaller. The existing four houses in the terrace also form a symmetrical whole in terms of their fenestration, which is particularly apparent on the front elevation. The proposed dwelling itself would not only be noticeably narrower than those existing but would unbalance this symmetry by its new openings.
9. I conclude that these effects of the proposed development would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area. They would not respect and make a positive contribution to its character including the street scene and would not retain the open landscaped setting of the footpath, a key landscape feature of the estate, which are requirements of Policy CS21 (Design) of the Woking Borough Core Strategy (CS).

Parking

10. The County Council as Highway Authority raises no objection on the basis that it does not consider the net additional traffic generation, access arrangements and on-street parking provision would have a material impact on the safety and operation of the highway. That is unsurprising because the proposal is only for one additional small two bedroom house.
11. But the Council's concerns, and those of residents who have submitted objections on this ground, go beyond that. Farnley is a small cul-de-sac with a limited number of garages and on-street parking spaces. There is no room for any more to be created and an additional dwelling on top of the 11 existing dwellings is a relatively large proportionate increase. I saw the site in the middle of the afternoon when there were several spare car parking spaces but I am aware from residents' representations that the situation may well be very different at night and at weekends. Indeed residents have said that parking is already strained in Farnley and Bishop's Wood.
12. The appellant points out that Farnley and Clifton Way are not subject to parking restrictions. Whilst this is so, Farnley's parking spaces are limited and cannot be increased as set out above. Clifton Way is a major route through the estate and is a bus route. It also curves considerably at this point along its length and if cars were to park on it due to lack of spaces within Farnley itself this could well impact on the flow, if not the safety, of local traffic including buses.
13. The proposed new dwelling would not have a garage and so its occupiers would most likely park on-street on Farnley where they would compete for spaces with existing residents. I can appreciate, in the context of such a small residential cul-de-sac, that this may raise tensions amongst residents because a greater number would have to compete for the same number of spaces. Whilst this factor on its own is not determinative it does signify to me the

fundamental unacceptability of this additional dwelling because it is unlikely to be able to meet its own parking requirements.

14. I conclude for these reasons that the proposed development would be very likely to exacerbate a shortage of on-street parking in the local area. CS Policy CS18 points out that minimum standards will be set for residential development, which is 1.5 spaces in the case of the proposal. The proposal would fail to meet these standards and would exacerbate a shortage of on-street parking in the local area and so fail to comply with Policy CS18.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Nick Fagan

INSPECTOR