
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 April 2017

by Andrew Dawe BSc(Hons) MSc MPhil MRTPI

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

Decision date: 18 April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/B1740/W/17/3166934

57 Chatsworth Way, New Milton, Hampshire BH25 5UQ

- 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 John Maunsell against the decision of New Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/11341, dated 27 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 28 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is rear and side extensions to form new one bedroom dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - i) the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area;
 - ii) whether the proposed development would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers of the one bedroom unit with regard to the provision of private amenity space, and of the two bedroom unit in respect of outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The site is located in a prominent location at the end of a short terrace of dwellings adjacent to Chatsworth Way with its side elevation angled slightly away from the roadside boundary. There are a variety of property designs and layouts in the vicinity. However, there is a pleasant sense of spaciousness to the streetscene with noticeable degrees of space between generally small groupings of dwellings and, such as to the east of the appeal site, significant areas of grass verge. Although it is not unusual for the side elevations of dwellings to be close to the roadside boundaries of their plots, as is the case with No 57, they are generally also seen in the context of a good degree of rear garden depth or being set apart from the road by significant verge areas.
 4. Those gardens of Nos 20 to 23 to the south-east of the site are smaller than most but are set well back from the road and still, in any case, have a fairly good degree of depth from the rear of the houses.
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5. The proposed development would subdivide the existing fairly large garden area, retaining a good degree of depth to that relating to the two bedroom unit. However, due to the combination of the extension to the one bedroom unit and the formation of a parking area at the end of the garden, the remaining depth of garden for that property would be severely restricted. Furthermore, the extension to the side would leave only a narrow garden area to the side of the house. That degree of restriction, very close to the road, would stand out as a cramped form of development uncharacteristic of the general spaciousness of the existing streetscene.
6. The proposed break in the existing boundary wall that runs alongside this stretch of the street would in itself not substantially affect the continuity provided by its currently unbroken nature. This is particularly as the opening would be towards one end of the wall and seen in the context of the streetscene generally where breaks in roadside boundary treatment are not unusual. However, the opening and lowered section of wall to the sides would enable the cramped site layout to be particularly visible from the street.
7. Further disproportionate attention would be drawn to the proposal by the design of the rear roofslope of the proposed one bedroom unit, extending, unbroken, down to ground floor eaves level. That feature would have a jarring effect when seen in the context of surrounding two storey properties which, despite their various designs, generally and characteristically retain their eaves at the first floor level.
8. For the above reasons, I conclude on this issue that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. As such, in respect of this issue, it would be contrary to policy CS2 of the New Forest District outside of the National Park Council Core Strategy (the Core Strategy) which, amongst other things, requires new development to be well designed to respect the character, identity and context of the area. Also in respect of this issue, it would be contrary to section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which relates to requiring good design.

Living conditions

9. As referred to above, the proposed rear garden area of the one bedroom unit would have a severely restricted depth, excluding the parking area. However, the width of that space would enable it to be a fairly useable area.
10. The outlook from the proposed ground floor kitchen-dining room of the two bedroom unit would be restricted to some extent by the extended side wall relating to the other unit, particularly due to its height and close proximity. However, the slope of the roof down to ground floor eaves level would reduce the massing effect. This, together with the wide, full height glazing to the room concerned, which would allow direct outlook over the whole of the rear garden area, would prevent an overbearing effect or an unacceptable sense of enclosure. That sloping roof factor, together with the presence of only a boundary fence on the other side, would ensure that a fairly good degree of openness would be afforded to the garden space immediately to the rear of that unit.
11. For the above reasons, I conclude on this issue that the proposed development would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers of the one

bedroom unit with regard to the provision of private amenity space, and of the two bedroom unit in respect of outlook. As such, in respect of this issue, it would accord with policy CS2 of the Core Strategy which, amongst other things, requires new development not to cause adverse impact on amenities. It would also accord with the Framework in respect of this issue, which in paragraph 17 states that planning should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all future occupants of land and buildings.

Conclusion

12. The Framework sets out that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development and indicates that to achieve that, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.
13. I have had regard to the benefit of the scheme, raised by the appellant, relating to meeting the need for smaller homes for older people and starter homes, and the contribution to the supply of windfall sites. In this respect, the appellant also raises an issue of the Council being unlikely to meet its housing supply targets.
14. I have not received evidence which provides a conclusive answer to the housing supply issue. Nonetheless, even if there is not such a supply, the unacceptable harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the surrounding area would significantly and demonstrably outweigh my findings in respect of the living conditions of future occupiers and the small benefit of a net additional contribution of one dwelling towards addressing the undersupply of housing and those other specific housing needs referred to above. It would therefore not be a sustainable form of development.
15. Therefore, for the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andrew Dawe

INSPECTOR