
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 May 2017

by Richard Schofield BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 24 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C1760/W/17/3168213

Emcote, Drove Road, Chilbolton, Stockbridge, Hants SO20 6AB

- 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 David Foster against the decision of Test Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/02092/FULLN, dated 12 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 26 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is new two bedroomed bungalow with two parking spaces.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. Branksome Avenue, onto which the appeal proposal would face, is a mature, semi-rural residential street. It is not characterised by any particular uniformity of dwelling design or layout. Nonetheless, the road has deep grass verges and pavements, with dwellings set back further from it behind them. Spaces between dwellings are also generous, with separation typically being achieved by at least the width of a driveway. This all serves to give the road a sense of space and openness.
 4. The appeal scheme would result in the presence of two dwellings on a plot originally designed for one. This is not always an issue, but in the above context, and given the already limited size of the rear garden of Emcote, it would be here. There would be very little space between the proposed dwelling, Netherstone to the west and Emcote to the east, with the new dwelling sitting remarkably tight to its boundaries.
 5. It would appear cramped, shoehorned onto an undersized plot, and at odds with the prevailing spacious character of the street, to which the space between Emcote and Netherstone, comprised of much of Emcote's rear garden, contributes.
 6. I conclude that the appeal proposal would have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with policies E1 and E2
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of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan, which seek, among other things, to ensure that new development respects and complements the character of the area in which it is located and does not have a detrimental impact upon its appearance.

7. The Council's decision notice also makes reference to Policy COM2. This relates to the settlement hierarchy and, as such, does not appear to be relevant to the issue of character and appearance.

Other Matters

8. It is suggested that the appeal proposal would make use of 'semi-redundant' garden land. It was not apparent from my site visit or from the evidence before me how this semi-redundancy is manifested, but just because land is undeveloped, does not make it redundant (semi or otherwise). The contribution of Emcote's rear garden to Branksome Avenue's spacious character is noted above. As such, I do not consider that it can be reasonably considered as redundant.
9. The Chilbolton Village Design Statement (VDS) was drawn to my attention, specifically paragraphs 7 to 9 of the Summary of Guidelines, with which it was suggested that the appeal scheme conforms. The VDS was adopted by the Council, albeit some time ago, as a supplementary planning document and, as such, carries moderate weight. Nonetheless, notwithstanding that I do not consider that the appeal scheme would conform with paragraph 7, which seeks to secure sympathetic design, the VDS does not outweigh the requirements of the adopted development plan, with which I have found conflict.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, and taking all other matters into consideration, I conclude that the appeal proposal conflicts with the development plan when taken as a whole and, thus, that the appeal should be dismissed.

Richard Schofield

INSPECTOR