



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 June 2017

by J Ayres BA Hons, Solicitor

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

Decision date: 27th June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3825/W/17/3169912
18 Oliver Road, Horsham RH12 1LH

- 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 Heartfield Homes Limited against the decision of Horsham District Council.
 - The application Ref DC/16/2605, dated 15 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of one 3 bedroom detached property and construction of three detached 4 bedroom dwellings with attached garages.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. Houses in Oliver Road are generally well set back behind front gardens creating a sense of spaciousness. In contrast, the narrow frontage and irregular shape of the appeal site would result in a cramped layout with all three houses positioned to one side of the access road. The size and scale of the houses relative to their diminutive plots would further erode the sense of spaciousness. The overall impression would be of houses shoe-horned onto the site compared with their neighbours in Oliver Road.
4. The staggered arrangement of the houses, along with their scale, would result in a poor relationship with each other as well as the existing dwellings along Oliver Road. In my view, due to the layout the proposal would fail to integrate with the surrounding built development.
5. My attention has been drawn to 11a and 11b Oliver Road as a comparable scheme. It is clear that these properties maintain the character and appearance of the area in relation to the sense of spaciousness that I have identified, and are positioned in a form that respects the layout of Oliver Road. Accordingly I consider the proposal to be materially distinct from this development.

6. The appellant has referred me to a scheme granted at Longfield Road¹. The positioning of the built form within the site provides a more satisfactory relationship between the dwellings, and the layout does not appear cramped due to the distance between them and their arrangement around a cul-de-sac. Therefore the circumstances are materially different and I have attached limited weight to that appeal decision.
7. I note the appellant's commitment to retaining some of the existing planting within the appeal site, with particular regard to the monkey puzzle tree. I also acknowledge that the appellant has amended the design of the proposed dwellings to address concerns raised by the Council. However, these considerations do not outweigh my concerns in respect of the positioning of the dwellings and their relationship with the existing built form in the surrounding area.
8. The appellant refers to the proposal delivering a sustainable scheme. I accept that the proposal would provide two additional dwellings in a sustainable location, close to Horsham and its transport links. However, in my judgement, the benefit of two additional dwellings would not overcome the harm that I have identified in respect of the character and appearance of the area.
9. For these reasons I find that the overall effect of the proposal in terms of its scale and mass, siting and layout, would cause material harm to the character and appearance of the area. The siting of the dwellings and the layout of the proposal would fail to integrate the appeal site with its surroundings. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policies 25 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) which seek to ensure that development respects the character of the area, and relates sympathetically to the built surroundings.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, and taking into account all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Johanna Ayres

INSPECTOR

¹ APP/Z3825/W/16/3147081