
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 June 2017

by H Butcher BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 29th June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C1760/W/17/3168868

Amport and District Bus Service, Eastfield House, Amesbury Road, Weyhill, Andover, SP11 8ED

- 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 Philip Tedd against the decision of Test Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/03065/FULLN, dated 5 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 30 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is 2 No new 4 bed houses with detached double garages.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site is an area of open undeveloped land accessed off of the entrance to Amport and District Bus Service. The surrounding area to the appeal site has an overriding open and rural character; the main exception being the adjacent coach yard. There are also houses either side of the appeal site in a loose linear formation but these are relatively large detached properties in generous sized plots with space all around them, which fits with the spacious and rural character of the area.
 4. The two proposed dwellings are clearly designed as such each replicating the style of the adjacent property Eastfield Bungalow. They would, however, sit in close proximity to each other and the site's boundaries. The limited space between and around the proposed dwellings would make them appear cramped when viewed in the context of the more spacious residential development either side. As a result they would appear as a rather awkward pair of dwellings out of keeping with the pattern of surrounding development.
 5. Although the site is well screened by mature hedging the two dwellings and their close proximity would still be discernible above this by people passing the site by car or on foot, and in private views from neighbouring properties. Furthermore planting cannot be considered to be a permanent feature.
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6. For the above reasons the proposed dwellings would be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. As such the proposal would conflict with Policies E1 and E2 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) which require development to respect the character of the area in which it is located in terms of, amongst other things, layout.

Other matters

7. The appellant states that the houses are for employees of the adjacent coach yard who work unsociable hours but no evidence is provided in respect of this or any detailed justification for two dwellings of the sizes proposed. It is also argued that the properties would provide extra security for the coach yard which occupies a vulnerable, isolated position and has suffered from theft and vandalism in the past. I am conscious, however, that the site already benefits from planning permission for a detached house (ref 16/01820/FULLN) which could provide additional security and staff accommodation. Likewise it also appears that the appellant owns the adjacent property Eastfield House. On the evidence before me, therefore, I do not consider that the need for employee accommodation or security override the harm I have identified.
8. I note the appellant's comment that the footprint of the proposal is comparable to the approved house. I have not been provided with full details of the above permission so I am unable to make any meaningful comparisons. However, I am clear that that was for one dwelling and the proposal before me now is for two. This matter does not, therefore, alter my findings above.

Conclusion

9. I have had regard to all matters raised, including that the development would make a modest contribution to local housing supply, but conclude that this does not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Hayley Butcher

INSPECTOR