



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 June 2017

by Grahame Gould BA MPhil MRTPI

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

Decision date: 3rd July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M3645/W/17/3170141
367 Limpsfield Road, Warlingham CR6 9HA

- 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 Neil Crocker of Ravenshead Homes Limited against the decision of Tandridge District Council.
 - The application Ref TA/2016/666, dated 20 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 25 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is erection of 2 no. residential apartments with undercroft parking.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the development on: the character and appearance of the area; and the living conditions for its occupiers, with particular regard to outdoor space, refuse storage and parking.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The development would involve the construction of a two storey building which would comprise an undercroft parking area on the ground floor and two, one bedroom flats on the first floor. The building would occupy a parking area to the rear of 367 to 373 Limpsfield Road (Nos 367 to 373). Nos 367 to 373 comprise a short parade of ground floor commercial premises, with six flats above.
4. The building's footprint would cover the vast majority of the site and it would occupy a prominent position in the streetscene to the rear of Limpsfield Road. That is because the building would immediately adjoin the service road that provides access not only to Nos 367's to 373's parking area but also to the properties and public car park to the north and east of the site. The service road also forms part of the local definitive public footpath network. The siting and scale of the building would mean that there would be no space between it and the site's boundaries. There would therefore be no opportunity to provide any relieving soft landscaping and I consider that this development would have a stark and cramped appearance within the streetscene.

5. I consider that this building's unacceptable appearance within the streetscene would be accentuated by the fact that so much of the first floor would be devoid of fenestration, resulting in extremely bland side and rear elevations, while the ground floor would be dominated by the expansive void of the undercroft parking area. The building would also have an extensive dummy pitched roof. Overall I consider that the building would have a poor appearance, with the design having been compromised because of the cramped nature of the development.
6. I therefore conclude that the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The development would therefore be in conflict with Policy DP7 of the Tandridge Local Plan Part 2 Detailed Policies 2014 to 2029 (the Local Plan) because it would fail to respect the streetscene and its scale, bulk and spacing would result in an overdevelopment of the site.

Living Conditions

7. Nine on-site parking spaces would be provided for the use of both the occupiers of the existing flats at Nos 367 to 373 and the development. Under the Council's adopted parking standards¹ the requirement for two, one bedroom flats would be a combined total of three parking spaces. The Council has submitted that there is a requirement to provide nine parking spaces under the terms of the planning permission for the existing flats at Nos 367 to 373. The development would have a shortfall of three parking spaces and it would have the potential to reduce the amount of parking available for the occupiers of the existing flats or leave the occupants of the new flats with no off-street parking available to them.
8. While the site is within the centre of Warlingham it is around 1.6 Km (as the crow flies) and 2.4 Km (actual walking distance) from the nearest railway station². Given the distance between the railway station and the site, I consider that the accessibility to the station would be insufficient to act as a significant deterrent to private vehicle ownership amongst the occupiers of the existing and proposed flats.
9. At the time of my late morning site visit the existing parking area at the site was full and there were few available parking spaces on Limpsfield Road or in the public car park at the end of the service road. The area within the immediate vicinity of Nos 367 to 373 therefore appears to be subject to a high level of parking demand, with the parking that is available either on-street or in the public car park being subject to duration restrictions.
10. Taking the above mentioned factors into account I consider that there would be an inadequate amount of on and off site parking available to meet the needs of the occupiers of both the new and existing flats. That inadequacy would mean that parking would not be readily available to the occupiers of the new flats and could result in conditions that would be harmful to their living conditions.
11. The acceptance of below standard parking provision has been referred to in connection with various developments in Warlingham. However, each case must be considered on its individual merits and in reaching a view on this

¹ The Tandridge Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document 2012

² The Council's appeal written statement

aspect of the appeal I have had regard to the specific circumstances of the development and its relationship with the existing flats at Nos 367 to 373.

12. No on-site outdoor space would be available to the occupiers of the flats. While there are areas of public open space around 180 metres from the site, I consider it would be reasonable for new build flats in a small town, such as Warlingham, to have some on-site outdoor space available to their occupiers. While reference has been made to a flat conversion scheme allowed on appeal³ with no on-site outdoor space provision, I consider that development not to be directly comparable with the new build scheme before me. I therefore consider that the absence of on-site outdoor space would contribute to this development providing poor living conditions for its occupiers. This shortcoming of the development is symptomatic of it representing an overdevelopment for the site.
13. It is alleged that the development would make inadequate provision for refuse storage for its occupiers. However, a relatively large bin storage area is shown on the ground floor plan included on drawing 3128-04 Revision C. I consider that it would be possible to provide sufficient waste storage on-site and that in this respect the proposed arrangements would not be harmful to the living conditions for the occupiers of the development.
14. For the reasons given above I conclude that the development would provide unacceptable living conditions for its occupiers in terms of the inadequacy of the parking and outdoor space provision. There would therefore be conflict with the eighth and ninth criteria of Policy DP7 of the Local Plan because the development would fail to provide its occupiers with a satisfactory living environment and appropriate individual and communal facilities.

Other Matter

15. Concern has been raised that the development might be harmful to the living conditions for the prospective occupiers of the house that has been allowed on appeal on the land to the rear of 377 Limpsfield Road⁴. As the development is to be dismissed for other reasons I consider it is unnecessary for me to consider any effect the development might have on the occupiers of the house that has recently been granted planning permission.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above the appeal is dismissed.

Grahame Gould

INSPECTOR

³ APP/M3645/A/13/2204728

⁴ APP/M3645/W/16/3161866