



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 18 July 2017

by Grahame Gould BA MPhil MRTPI

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

Decision date: 9th August 2017

Appeal A Ref: APP/Z3825/W/17/3170234

Brook House, 46 Comptons Lane, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 5NY

- 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 County Gate Properties Brighton Limited against the decision of Horsham District Council.
 - The application Ref DC/16/2349, dated 17 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as 'demolition of an existing dwelling and the erection of 4 No. 4 bed dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping (Option 1)'.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/Z3825/W/17/3170240

Brook House, 46 Comptons Lane, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 5NY

- 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 County Gate Properties Brighton Limited against the decision of Horsham District Council.
 - The application Ref DC/16/2350, dated 17 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as 'demolition of an existing dwelling and the erection of 4 No. 4 bed dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping (Option 2)'.
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Decision

1. Appeals A and B are dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The schemes subject to appeals A and B (schemes A and B) would both involve the demolition of 46 Comptons Lane (No 46) and the construction of four detached houses. The schemes subject to appeals A and B are very similar, with the differences relating to the design of the roofs for some single storey elements of the houses. As the issues raised by the appeals are similar I have considered them concurrently.
3. Prior to the determination of the appealed applications amended layout plans were submitted to the Council and I have determined the appeals having regard to those plans.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the developments on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. No 46 occupies an extensive corner plot at the junction of Comptons Lane with St Leonards Road. Comptons Lane is characterised by properties of varied designs and the dwellings in this street have a quite spacious appearance, given their set back from the highway. St Leonards Road, within the immediate vicinity of No 46, comprises a mixture of houses and bungalows, and architecturally the designs of the dwellings exhibit less variation than is the case for Comptons Lane. The houses in St Leonards Road, in particular, have a less spacious layout because many of them have linked attached garages. However, for those properties visual relief is provided by the gaps above the garage roofs.
6. For schemes A and B the gaps between houses 1 and 2 and houses 2 and 3, whether they be between single storey or two storey elevations, would only be two metres wide, while for houses 3 and 4, at their closest, there would be a similar separation. Given the limited spacing between the houses in both schemes, I consider that they would have a tighter layout than is the case for the existing development in St Leonards Road. The frontages for houses 1 to 3 would for the most part be hard landscaped and would therefore have a harder appearance than the existing properties in St Leonards Road, which have mixed soft and hard landscaped frontages. The mixture of soft and hard landscaped areas assists in providing some compensating relief for the limited separation between the dwellings in St Leonards Road, a characteristic neither scheme A or B would share.
7. House 4 would be sited significantly in advance of the front elevation of No 46. House 4's siting would therefore diminish the sense of spaciousness that currently exists at the road junction.
8. I therefore consider that when the foregoing factors are taken into account schemes A and B would both have an uncharacteristically cramped appearance that would detract from the streetscene. I consider that the difference in roof design for the single storey elements of the schemes would be inconsequential, given the nature of the harm I have identified. In finding that the schemes would be harmful, my concern is not with the plot densities but the lack of space between the houses within either scheme. I am therefore not persuaded that schemes A or B have addressed all of the concerns that gave rise to the refusal of the previous five house scheme and the dismissal of the subsequent appeal¹.
9. For the reasons given above I conclude that the developments would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. There would therefore be conflict with Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (excluding South Downs National Park) of 2015 and section 7 (Requiring good design) of the National Planning Policy Framework. That is because neither of the developments would be of a high quality of design in that they would have an unsympathetic relationship with their surroundings.

¹ APP/Z3825/W/15/3140956

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above I conclude that appeals A and B should be dismissed.

Grahame Gould

INSPECTOR