

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 August 2017

by **S M Holden BSc MSc CEng MICE TPP FCIHT MRTPI**

Decision date: 18TH August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L3815/W/17/3173113

27 Coney Six, East Wittering PO20 8DL

- 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 D Prudence against the decision of Chichester District Council.
 - The application Ref EWB/16/03920/FUL, dated 30 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 31 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is 2 no. dwellings and associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. Since the application was determined the appellant has submitted a Unilateral Undertaking (UU). This has secured the appropriate financial contribution towards mitigation measures necessary to protect the Chichester and Langstone Harbours Special Protection Area from recreational disturbance. The Council has therefore withdrawn its second reason for refusing the application. I have taken the UU into account in my determination of the appeal.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. Coney Six is part of a private residential estate characterised by narrow streets and a variety of detached dwellings, most of which are 1.5-2 storeys in height. They are set in similarly sized plots which provide off-street parking.
5. No 27 is one of a row of properties which look over the foreshore. Their rear gardens have direct access to the beach, only separated from it by a small grassy bank and a row of beach huts. Several properties within this particular row have been updated or replaced and the area therefore has taken on a more contemporary style. By contrast No 27 is a bungalow of indifferent quality, which occupies a smaller proportion of its plot. It has an attached garage, additional ancillary single-storey structures within its front garden and a well-proportioned rear garden.
6. The proposal would replace the existing bungalow with a pair of semi-detached dwellings. The design would give the appearance of a single house with a shared gravel forecourt served by two vehicular entrances. There would be a single garage and a wall would enclose the remainder of the front garden. This

would maintain the appearance of a single detached dwelling when viewed from the street. At the rear it is proposed to retain an open shared garden space, rather than introducing a boundary that would sub-divide the plot. The rear garden is not highly visible from the foreshore due to the bank and beach huts. Even if a boundary treatment was subsequently erected, it would only be glimpsed through gaps between the huts and would not be conspicuous. These aspects of the scheme would therefore be acceptable.

7. However, the footprint of the proposed dwelling would be significantly deeper than that of the existing house. Its front elevation would be closer to the road and its additional height and width at first floor level would give the building a more bulky appearance. At the back it would project considerably further into the garden, although not beyond the rear elevations of the properties on either side. Its rear elevation would be staggered in order to provide both properties with a first floor balcony.
8. The height of the building would be comparable with the adjacent dwellings. This would not look out of place when viewed from the foreshore. However, the design includes a large expanse of crown roof. This would not only be deep but would also occupy approximately half the width of the building. Consequently the building would appear overly bulky with very limited space between the flank walls and the side boundaries. The combined effects of the depth, height and width of the proposal would make the building appear too large for this modest sized plot. In this respect the proposal cannot be compared with the dwelling at No 23. This building not only has a flat roof but its upper floor is also set in further from the side boundaries than the ground floor, which ensures that it is comfortably accommodated within its plot.
9. Taking all these factors into account, I conclude that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. It would fail to comply with Policy 33 of the Chichester Local Plan: *Key Policies* which, amongst other things, requires new residential development to respect the character of the surrounding area, having regard to factors including layout, massing, height and scale. As the area is not a conservation area and no heritage assets in the locality were drawn to my attention, I am satisfied that there would be no conflict with Policy 47, which is primarily concerned with the conservation of the historic environment.
10. In reaching my conclusion I have had regard to other developments where the replacement of detached dwellings by pairs of semi-detached houses has been permitted. However, from the limited information provided, it seems to me that the layout of properties in Marine Drive West is materially different from Coney Six which is characterised by a more compact form of development along a narrower street. Those schemes are therefore not directly comparable with the appeal proposal, which I have determined on its individual planning merits.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other relevant matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Sheila Holden

INSPECTOR