



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 October 2018

by H Butcher BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd November 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/G1250/W/18/3198237

213 Holdenhurst Road, Bournemouth BH8 8DE

- 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 Ms K Luckham against the decision of Bournemouth Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 7-2017-2500-D, dated 22 July 2017, was refused by notice dated 6 November 2017.
 - The development proposed is the conversion of the dwellinghouse to 5 self-contained flats.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published during the appeal and both parties were given the opportunity to comment on the relevance of this to their cases.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the development on: (i) Highway safety along Holdenhurst Road; (ii) The living conditions of future occupiers of the development having particular regard to living space, and; (iii) The Dorset Heathlands Special Protection Area and Ramsar Site (SPA) and Dorset Heaths Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

Reasons

Highway Safety

4. The appeal site is a large semi-detached property set over three storeys. The frontage of the property is given over to hard standing and there is vehicular access to Holdenhurst Road from here over a footway.
5. The proposed unallocated parking layout for the development is shown on plan 213 HR 05 Amendment C where three parking spaces are shown grouped together along with a fourth on the opposite side. The layout is very tight with spaces abutting each other and/or site boundaries.
6. The Council commissioned a computer swept path analysis to track a large car accessing the site based on the proposed parking layout. The main findings were that a car entering the site from the south would be obstructed from

accessing spaces 1-3 (as detailed on the Council's Swept Path Drawing Nos D001 - D004) in one manoeuvre due to parking space 4. This would mean additional vehicle manoeuvres in order to access these spaces. Similarly when entering from the north, spaces 2 and 3 would require four vehicle manoeuvres in order to park. There would also be issues with exiting spaces 1,2 and 4 which would require variously between four and six manoeuvres in order to turn on site.

7. Holdenhurst Road is a relatively busy road. Furthermore, there is evidence of 25 personal injury collisions being recorded within the vicinity of the appeal site over a five year period. As shown by the swept path analysis, the proposed parking layout, even before taking into consideration my concerns in relation to the tightness of the layout, would result in reversing movements and multiple vehicle manoeuvres to the extent that drivers may be inclined to reverse vehicles out onto Holdenhurst Road. Given the existing conditions along Holdenhurst Road I find this would be unacceptable as it would clearly be detrimental to highway safety.
8. The parking requirement for the development is 4.3 spaces based on the Parking Supplementary Planning Document (2014) and I consider four spaces to be reasonable for a development of five flats having consideration to the relatively accessible location of the site but also that there are parking restrictions along this section of Holdenhurst Road. The appellant's suggestion that the fourth parking space be removed by condition is therefore not acceptable. Nor am I satisfied, having myself parked and manoeuvred a relatively large vehicle on the appeal site, that a revised parking layout would overcome my above concerns.
9. I therefore find that the proposal would be detrimental to highway safety along Holdenhurst Road and as such would conflict with the broad thrust of Policy 8.2 of the Bournemouth District Wide Local Plan which is to enhance traffic safety on District Distributor Roads such as Holdenhurst Road. It would also conflict with Policy CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan Core Strategy (2012) (CS) where it sets out that development should contribute positively to the safety of the public realm.
10. I note the appellant's comments that the site was previously used as a 10 bedroom guesthouse and a House in Multiple Occupation. I do not have full details as to these previous uses before me, but in any event, I consider them to be materially different to the proposal before me. The appellant also argues that a larger turning space is proposed than in many supermarkets or stores. However, no firm evidence of this is provided, and even if it this were so, it would not justify the harm I have found.

Living Conditions

11. On the face of the plans and the number of bed spaces shown, all of the proposed flats, with the exception of Flat 4, would fall just below the nationally described space standard. However, this standard can only be applied if there is a relevant plan policy requiring compliance with it. Furthermore, the Framework sets out in footnote 46 that policies may make use of the nationally described space standard where the need for an internal space standard can be justified. There is, however, no evidence before me to this effect.

12. Notwithstanding the above, the relevant part of Policy CS41 of the CS refers to the need for well-designed spaces which provide a high standard of amenity to meet the day-to-day requirements of future occupants. Whilst the proposed flats may not meet the nationally described space standard, from the floor plans before me they would all provide good sized bedrooms, living areas, separate kitchens (in most cases) and either a shower room(s) or bathroom. I am also conscious that this appeal concerns the conversion of an existing building. Furthermore, the way it has been divided up is logical in my opinion with two flats on both the ground and the first floor, and one flat on the second floor.
13. Taking the above points together I therefore consider that the proposed flats would provide sufficient living space for future occupants which would not be detrimental to their living conditions. As such I find no conflict with Policy CS41 of the CS.

SPA and SAC

14. The appeal site is within 5km of the Dorset Heathlands SPA and Ramsar site, and the Dorset Heaths SAC. Mitigation against any harmful impacts from the development on these sites is therefore required in accordance with an adopted mitigation strategy. However, as I am dismissing for other reasons it is not necessary for me to consider this matter further as it could not change the outcome of this appeal.

Other matters

15. The appellant argues that the rear extension and works proposed would improve the overall appearance of the building. However, such improvements could be made without resulting in the harm I have identified. The same is true in terms of improving the energy efficiency of the building. The development would provide additional housing in an accessible location, for which there is demand, and future residents would support local businesses. Nevertheless, these matters do not outweigh the harm to highway safety that I have found. Finally I have had regard to surrounding developments referred to by the appellant. However, I have not been provided with full details in each case so as to be able to draw any meaningful comparisons. In any event, each appeal must be dealt with on its own planning merits.

Conclusion

16. Whilst I have found no harm to the living conditions of future occupiers of the flats, I have found harm to highway safety due to the proposed parking layout. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Hayley Butcher

INSPECTOR