
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 June 2019

by K Ford MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date:

Appeal Ref: APP/D3640/W/19/3220166

5 Prior Road, Camberley, Surrey GU15 1DB

- 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 R Roopun against the decision of Surrey Heath Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 17/0777, dated 11 August 2017, was refused by notice dated 17 July 2018.
 - The development proposed is demolish existing property and erect 2 detached houses and single garages.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - The effect on the character and appearance of the area.
 - The effect on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBHSPA).

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal site is a 2 storey detached dwelling set back from the road behind a driveway and front garden. There are a variety of styles of property in the area but a unifying feature is that the detached properties are in spacious irregular shaped plots. This and the boundary treatments of plots creates a verdant, semi rural character. The site is located within the Wooded Hills Character Area of the Western Urban Area Supplementary Planning Document 2012.
4. The proposal would generate a narrow gap between the 2 proposed dwellings, particularly towards the rear of the properties due to the angled design. The absence of a generous space between the buildings would be at odds with the wider character of the area.
5. Although the proposed 2 storey properties would be set back from the road, the accompanying detached garages would stand forward of this, detracting from the open character of the front gardens in the area. The development would introduce a built form, the impact of which would be compounded by the blank facades of the garages fronting the road.

6. The development would have an incongruous appearance that would fail to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the street scene. The retention of existing trees to the front of the site would do little to overcome the harm. The absence of objections from neighbouring residents does not negate this.
7. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) promotes an efficient use of land. However, this should not be at the expense of the character and appearance of the area. Paragraph 127 of the NPPF requires that whilst not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change, development should be sympathetic to local character.
8. The proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area and as such would conflict with the parts of Policy CP2 and Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 (CSDMP) which requires new development to be of high quality design that respects and enhances local character. It would also conflict with the relevant guiding principles of the Western Urban Area Supplementary Planning Document 2012 and the Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2017.

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

9. The site is located within 5km of the TBHSPA. As such the net additional dwelling has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the integrity of the TBHSPA through dog walking and other recreational use. In addition to the financial contribution towards the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace, provided through a Community Infrastructure Levy payment, Policy CP14B of the CSDMP requires all new residential development to contribute towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring measures. The Council has identified that the net additional dwelling would generate a payment of £973. However, there is nothing before me to indicate that this has been secured. I cannot therefore be satisfied that the proposal would not harm the TBHSPA.
10. The proposal would consequently conflict with Policy CP14B of the CSDMP which only permits development where it would not give rise to likely significant adverse effects on the integrity of the TBHSPA.

Other Matters

11. The Council accepts that it cannot demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply. As such paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged and development plan policies should be regarded as out of date with a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
12. The proposal would lead to a net increase of one dwelling in an established residential area with access to services and facilities. There would be economic benefit during construction and occupation thereafter and the appellant has identified that the site is readily available for development, generating a net gain of one dwelling. However, the benefits would be very modest given the small scale of the scheme.
13. Against this there would be harm to the character and appearance of the area and the TBHSPA which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the very modest benefit of a net additional dwelling when considered against the NPPF

as a whole. The presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF does not therefore apply.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons identified, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

K Ford

INSPECTOR