
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 July 2019

by Andrew Tucker BA (Hons) IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/W/19/3227754

37, Corona, Upper Northam Road, Hedge End SO30 4EA

- 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 Val Green against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council.
 - The application Ref F/18/84257, dated 17 October 2018, was refused by notice dated 23 January 2019.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of existing bungalow and replacement with a new chalet bungalow property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a single storey bungalow of a modest scale, with a pair of hipped bays facing towards the road. It is set back from the road, occupying a position on the plot that is consistent with other buildings in the area. Building styles in the vicinity of the site do vary, but there is some consistency in terms of the use of traditional building forms and modest front facing bays and gables.
4. It would not necessarily be harmful to increase the scale of the existing building on the plot, and given the reasonable mix of styles in the area a well-designed contemporary replacement building could be successful. However, other buildings in the area incorporate simple built elements, such as full hips and complete bays with gables facing the road. In contrast the proposal would present an unnecessarily complicated arrangement to the street.
5. Two ground floor bays would be formed either side of the front entrance, but they would not be properly expressed as they would merge into the wide oversailing first floor projection. In addition, unlike the proposed rear elevation, with its full gable projection, recessive first floor balcony and glazing that would extend in a simple manner to the underside of the roof, the odd shape and excessive scale of the first floor windows would make them overly dominant. These windows would be larger than the ground floor windows, which would give the front elevation a somewhat top heavy appearance. This be a poor design arrangement which would dominate the front elevation, and the design

- of the front elevation more generally would not relate well to the more modest and well-defined gable projections on neighbouring buildings.
6. Unlike most other buildings in the area which sit side by side, the impact of the poor design would be exacerbated by the prominent location of the site alongside an area of public open space to the side. The existing bungalow and the adjacent bungalow to the west, on the opposite side of the entrance to the woodland area, are of a matching modest scale, which works well with the wooded character of the intervening land. Not only would the front elevation of the proposed dwelling be much more prominent than the existing dwelling, it would also have a large side facing element that would project up to the side boundary, towards the adjacent wooded area. The combination of the form of the proposed front elevation and the prominent side facing gable, both of which would be seen above the height of any fences or replacement landscaping, would harm the character and appearance of the area and the adjacent open space.
 7. The appellant refers to the replacement and extension of nearby buildings. In terms of the alterations that have recently been carried out to the neighbouring bungalow to the east, although the side facing dormer extensions are rather bulky, the front elevation of this property retains a modest scale, with simple gable roofs formed over ground floor bay windows.
 8. The appellant also refers to two new dwellings that have been erected at 57 Upper Northam Road. Although these have a fairly bulky scale, their road facing elevations are arranged in a fairly simple manner, with a single first floor window to each gable that sits comfortably over a larger ground floor bay window. They do not have the same overall bulky scale that the appeal proposal would have.
 9. The existing bungalow has a run down appearance, and evidence suggests that it is not habitable in its current state. I have no doubt that the replacement dwelling would be more environmentally friendly than the existing bungalow, and that the proposal would bring back into use a disused plot of land. Such matters would accord with some of the overriding principles of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). However, I can see no reason why such improvements should be at the expense of good design. Furthermore, the environmental objective of sustainable development, as defined in the Framework, sets out the need for development to protect and enhance our built environment¹. It has been established that this would not be the case for the appeal proposal.
 10. In further support of the proposal the appellant suggests that the scheme would not be viable were it not for additional accommodation at first floor level, and that redeveloping the plot would minimise the potential for criminal activity. Whilst I do not dispute these matters, they are not sufficient to outweigh the harm I have found in relation to the character and appearance of the area.
 11. In summary, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Saved Policy 59.BE of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review 2001-2011, Policy DM1 of the Emerging Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 and the Framework which together seek to ensure that

¹ Paragraph 8 (c) of the National Planning Policy Framework.

development proposals are well designed to respect the site context including its character and appearance.

12. The Council also refers to the Character Area Appraisal for Hedge End, West End and Botley in its reason for refusal. The appeal site is within character area HEWEB 25, however details relating to this area are limited. Although I have found that the proposal would be contrary to the Policies referred to above, it would not have an adverse effect on the matters referred to in the guidance section on page 62 of the character appraisal, which are limited to the maintenance of verges and islands, mitigating the effects of heavy traffic and maintaining plot widths and building lines.

Other Matter

13. Within her statement the appellant has referred to minor design modifications that were discussed with the Council after it had made its decision, in an attempt to overcome the reason for refusal. However, these details are limited to illustrations attached to an email. The amendments have not been submitted formally as part of the appeal plans. On this basis, and taking into account the fact that the changes are minor and not sufficient to overcome my concerns with the proposal, I have not taken these plans into account in determining the appeal.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Andrew Tucker

INSPECTOR