



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 June 2019

by Christopher Miell MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/B1740/W/19/3226350

16 Knowland Drive, Milford-on-Sea, Hampshire SO41 0RH

- 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 J Stockwell against the decision of New Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref 18/11694, dated 24 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 15 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as "2No. detached bungalows and garage. Demolish existing bungalow".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. During the appeal process, I was notified by the main parties that part of the appeal site was in the ownership of a third party. Subsequently, the appellant served the requisite notice on the relevant land owners, who were given 21 days to comment on the appeal. I have been provided with a copy of the requisite notice by the appellant. Consequently, I am satisfied that no party will be prejudiced by my determination of the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a single storey detached bungalow situated on the western side of Knowland Drive. The property occupies a spacious plot and is set back from the highway behind a well landscaped front garden area which is a typical feature of the area. The front garden is noticeably wider than neighbouring properties when viewed from the street and extends to the boundary of the properties on Broadlands Close.
5. The surrounding area has a suburban residential character and there are a variety of property types along Knowland Road, which are predominately detached dwellings with simple hipped or gable roof forms. The properties are set back from the highway in a linear pattern of development and the frontage of properties typically aligned parallel with the highway, with properties

consistently spaced and following a clear building line, which contributes positively to the local distinctiveness of the area.

6. The appeal site is situated near the southern end of Knowland Drive, close to the junctions of Broadlands Lane and Deans Court (referred to in the appellant's statement as 'Canons Walk'). To the south of the site, the properties on Broadfields Close and Knowland Drive exhibit a denser pattern of development. It is proposed to demolish the existing building and erect two detached bungalows at the site. The properties have been designed with a staggered layout and to reflect the orientation of the properties on the northern side of Broadfields Close.
7. The existing property forms part of the Knowland Drive streetscene and reinforces the area's local distinctiveness. Whilst the existing property has a larger front garden than the neighbouring properties on Knowland Drive, the layout of the property follows the established building line of properties on the western side of Knowland Drive and the frontage is angled in such a manner that it aligns with the highway. The character and appearance of Broadfields Close is distinctively different, whereby the properties are terraced and occupy smaller plots.
8. Despite an appropriate single storey design, the staggered layout of the proposed dwellings would not be reflective of the pattern of development on Knowland Drive, whereby properties are aligned parallel with the highway. In addition, the depth and complex roof form of the proposed dwellings, especially Unit 1, would not be in keeping with the simpler forms of neighbouring properties on Knowland Drive. The staggered layout would accentuate the depth and roof mass of the proposed dwellings. Overall, the proposal would constitute a cramped form of development, which would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area.
9. I note from the evidence before me and my site observations, that there are examples of recently constructed infill development at Nos 1 and 2 Knowland Drive. In addition, planning permission has been granted for an infill scheme at No 3 Knowland Drive. All of the schemes involve the demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of two dwellings. Whilst no plans or information has been provided by the appellant in relation to the approved scheme at No 3, the schemes at Nos 1 and 2 appeared to be completed. The completed developments are aligned parallel with the highway and they are not directly comparable to the proposal before, which has a staggered layout. Moreover, the developments also display a great degree of spaciousness than the proposed scheme before me.
10. I also note that Nos 53a and 53b Knowland Drive, which are opposite the appeal site at the junction of Deans Court, are not aligned parallel with the highway. However, this development is situated on a corner plot behind several mature trees and therefore it is not directly comparable to the proposal. In addition, the evidence from the main parties suggests these dwellings were an infill development from the 1980's and therefore this decision predates the development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).
11. For the collective reasons outlined above, I conclude that the proposal would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, the proposal does not accord with Policy CS2 of the New Forest District (outside of

the National Park) Core Strategy (Adopted October 2009) and the Framework, which amongst other things, requires all new development to contribute positively to an area's local distinctiveness and sense of place, being appropriate in terms of layout and its relationship to adjoining buildings. In addition, the proposal would not be sympathetic to the local character, which is inconsistent with Paragraph 127 of the Framework.

Other Matters

12. I note that representations were made by local residents, some of whom raise additional concerns. However, given my findings on the main issues, it is not necessary to consider these matters in detail.
13. The appellant states that the proposal retains significant and meaningful areas of green space to the front of each dwelling, which are in keeping with the character of the area. Even if I were to accept this view, the provision of high levels of soft landscaping at the front of the site does not outweigh the significant harm to the character and appearance of the area, which I have identified above.
14. I note that the Framework states at paragraph 68 that small and medium sites can make an important contribution to meeting housing requirements and are often built out relatively quickly. However, all developments, including small and windfall sites, must also comply with the provision of the development plan in all other respects. Moreover, although the Milford on Sea Village Design Statement states that it would be unreasonable to expect Milford to remain unchanged, such changes must have an acceptable impact on its surroundings.
15. Both parties agree that there is a need to contribute towards mitigation of potential impacts on the New Forest and Solent Coast European sites and the Council has suggested a suitably worded condition to ensure that such mitigation would be secured should I be minded to allow the appeal. Nevertheless, as I have concluded that the proposed development would conflict with other development plan policies, I have not completed an appropriate assessment. However, given my findings on the main issue however, this is not a matter I need to address.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

16. The development seeks to boost the supply of housing which would result in some support for local services and facilities, both during construction and when the buildings are occupied. As such, the proposal would have social and economic benefits. Nevertheless, given the modest amount of development proposed, the weight I accord these benefits is limited. However, I have found that the proposed development would be contrary to the Development Plan for the reasons given above, to which I afford significant weight.
17. The Council accepts that it is unable to demonstrate a five year housing land supply and in accordance with paragraph 11 of the Framework the Development Plan policies which are most important for determining the appeal should be considered out-of-date. However, the harm I have found is serious and, in my view, that significantly and demonstrably outweighs the benefits of the scheme when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. As such the presumption in favour of sustainable development as envisaged by the Framework does not apply in this case. There are no other

material considerations that indicate a decision other than in accordance with the Development Plan.

18. For the reasons given above, and having regard to the development plan when read as a whole, the appeal should be dismissed.

Christopher Miell

INSPECTOR