



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 July 2019

by Tim Crouch DipUD MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: Thursday, 15 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/R3650/D/19/3227156

The Brake, Odiham Road, Farnham GU10 5AD

- 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 Mrs Lisa Jayne Klaver against the decision of Waverley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref WA/2018/2229, dated 20 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 27 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is new boundary fence, entrance wall and gates.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I note that the property is also referred to as Pottinger House within the appeal documents. For the purposes of this decision I have used the name that was provided on the application form.
3. Part of the Council's reason for refusal relates to the effect on the Green Belt. The appellant has submitted a screenshot of a map on the Council's website identifying the site as within land designated 'Countryside Beyond the Green Belt'. This has been provided to the Council, which does not dispute this designation. Therefore, the evidence before me identifies that the site does not lie within the Green Belt.
4. Consequently, the policies listed within the Council's refusal notice relating to the Green Belt are not relevant.

Application for costs

5. An application for costs was made by Mrs Lisa Jayne Klaver against Waverley Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

7. The proposal lies adjacent to the A287 in the countryside between Ewshot and Upper Hale. The property is set within large grounds, wooded in character which reflects the immediate area. To the north of the A287 it is open to the

- woodland and mature landscaping, with little formal boundary treatment. To the south side of the road it is also open for a significant distance from the roundabout to the east, past the site towards Upper Hale and Farnham. The property is set down a slope from the road, with limited views in. This produces a mature, verdant and wooded character between settlements.
8. The proposal includes a boundary fence to the front, with new entrance wall and gates set within the site. The boundary fence would be a height of 2.5m, for a length of 73m, according to the appellant. It would be positioned in front of the existing mature landscaping and trees within the site, set adjacent to the footpath alongside the road. This would be a single sided reflective timber acoustic fence to reduce noise pollution from what is described by the appellant as a busy stretch of the A287.
 9. This height and significant length of fencing would create a more formal boundary edge, harmfully out of character with the overall rural character and softer mature landscape setting. Given the position forward of the existing trees, and with open boundaries opposite and either side of the proposal, this would create a stark addition when in-situ despite a tree lined backdrop and a limited grass verge in the foreground.
 10. Whilst the character is mostly open, there are examples of other timber boundary fences along the road. However, these appear as occasional insertions into the wooded, verdant surroundings, rather than forming a key element of the character of the area. These mostly have a different character surrounding visible commercial premises and closer to the built-up area of Upper Hale. Furthermore, these appear to have been in position some time and are lower in height than the proposal. I also do not have full details that led to these proposals being accepted. In any event, the fact that apparently similar development may have been permitted is not a reason, on its own, to allow unacceptable development.
 11. The proposal also includes a 2 metre high brick wall lining the access to the property from the A287, for approximately 12 metres, to a pair of timber gates. Whilst the ground level slopes away and the access is at an angle, this enclosure, height and formality of material would have a harmful urbanising effect in this verdant wooded area.
 12. I recognise that as well as setting the importance of the need for high quality design, the criteria of Policy TD1 refers to maximising opportunities to improve the quality of life and health and well-being of current and future residents. I have had regard to the appellant's concerns that noise pollution from the A287 is a significant issue and that they have considered carefully how best to achieve an improved quality of life of their home, to address issues of health and well-being and the safety of their young children. However, I do not have detailed information before me of the level of noise intrusion or alternative measures that have been considered, discounted or which may have less of a visual impact. I therefore do not consider that these circumstances outweigh the harm that I have found.
 13. Therefore, the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, it would be contrary to policies TD1 of the Waverley Local Plan Part 1, Strategic Policies and Sites (2018), saved policies D1 and D4 of the Waverley Borough Local Plan (LP) (2002), Waverley Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (2010) and

paragraphs 127 and 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) (the Framework).

14. Taken together, and amongst other objectives, these require development to be of a high quality and of a design and materials which respect the local distinctiveness of the area. These also seek to prevent development which would result in material detriment to the environment by virtue of harm to the visual character and distinctiveness of a locality, particularly in respect of the design and scale of the development and its relationship to its surroundings.
15. Given that the site lies outside the Green Belt, paragraphs 133, 134 and 143 to 145 as listed on the Council's decisions notice are not relevant. Saved policy RD2 of the LP was also listed. This relates to extensions of dwellings in the countryside and I find it less relevant to the proposal.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Tim Crouch

INSPECTOR