



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 October 2019

by Jonathon Parsons MSc BSc DipTP (Cert Urb) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/M3645/W/19/3229746

22 Granville Road, Limpsfield RH8 0DA

- 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 Martyn Avery (Chartwell Land & New Homes (2) Limited) against the decision of Tandridge District Council.
 - The application Ref TA/2019/413, dated 21 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 8 May 2019.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of existing garage (for access) and the erection of detached, two storey family dwelling with associated parking. Erection of new single garage and utility extension to existing house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises the rear garden of a dwelling at 22 Granville Road and an area to the side of the existing dwelling (to serve as its access). Dwellings along Granville Road are mainly two storey set back similar distances from the road in large plots. Gaps between dwellings vary and there is a range of dwelling designs. There is a public footpath alongside the eastern boundary of the site. There is a fall in ground levels to the rear and a watercourse where mature landscaping predominates. In summary, the area has an attractive linear development pattern, spaciousness and mature landscaped qualities which positively contribute to the suburban character and appearance to the area. This can be appreciated along Granville Road, through the gaps in the street frontage, from the rear of dwellings themselves and the public footpath.
4. Policy DP8 of the Tandridge District Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies (LP) 2014 states proposals involving infilling, backland or the complete or partial redevelopment of garden land will be permitted only if the development scheme meets certain criteria. This includes that it must maintain, or where possible, enhance the character and appearance of the area, reflecting the variety of local housing types, and present a frontage in keeping with the existing street scene or prevailing layout of streets in the area, including footpath width, building orientation, visual separation between buildings and distance from the road.

5. The detailed aesthetic design and scale of proposed dwelling and detached garage would be in keeping with existing dwellings along Granville Road. However, the dwelling would be located in a rearward position behind the Granville Road frontage. Such a location would be visibly at odds with the prevailing linear form of development along Granville Road. To the rear of the site, there is a high density housing development along Snatts Hill, Westerham Road (the A25) and Detillens Lane, but again there are no significant backland type developments between this area and the dwelling at No 22.
6. The proposed dwelling would not be easily seen from the road due to the topography of the site and the retention of frontage vegetation. However, the dwelling would be conspicuous by reason of its location adjacent to the public footpath and from the backs of surrounding properties. Furthermore, the comings and goings of residents and visitors vehicles using the access would highlight the presence of a dwelling in an incongruous backland position. Accordingly, such a location for the development would be intrusive and would adversely affect the character and appearance of the area.
7. At Orchard Lea, an Inspector accepted that backland housing in the wider area was material. There were nearby examples of backland development including to the rear of the appeal site. In this appeal, the context would be different because there are no such examples. Similarly, at the Croft in Quarry Road, Fernshaw and Courtlands in Rockfield Road, there were backland housing sites in the vicinity. In fact, these sites are not far from the location of Orchard Lea. By way of contrast, Granville Road is a distinctive long straight road with linear frontage development prevailing.
8. The cul-de-sac developments shown on the map are a considerable distance away from the appeal site before me. Of the two closest cul-de-sacs, 75-85 Granville Road is at the eastern end of this road on the opposite side to the appeal site whilst Gresham Close is located off Gresham Road, also a considerable distance away. Therefore, there are considerable differences in context between these permitted developments and the appeal proposal before me. In any case, every proposal has to be considered on its particular planning merits.
9. For all these reasons, the development would fail to reflect and respect character, setting and local context and would fail to integrate effectively with its surroundings. Such a poorly designed proposal would conflict with policy CSP 18 of the Tandridge District Core Strategy (CS) 2008 and policies DP7 and DP8 of the LP.

Other matters

10. The proposal would boost housing land supply in a location which is within easy walking distance of the town centre with a wide range of shops and facilities, bus and train services. The dwelling would be sustainably constructed, with measures to enhance energy and water efficiency. By reason of being garden land, the appeal site is not previously developed land but this does not preclude it being developed subject to meeting environmental considerations.
11. However, the contribution of one dwelling to housing supply would be limited as would the resultant economic and social benefits. The adverse effect to the character and appearance of the area would be significant and permanent. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creating better places

in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. In this regard, this development would not be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting. Consequently, the development would not be sustainable.

Conclusion

12. The development would provide a dwelling within the built-up area but there would be harm to the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, the proposal would be contrary to the CS and LP policies, and the development plan as a whole. There would be no material considerations of sufficient weight or importance that determine that the decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the development plan and therefore planning permission should be refused.
13. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Jonathon Parsons

INSPECTOR