The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 October 2019 by Scott Britnell MSc FdA

Decision by R C Kirby BA(Hons) DIPTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/H1705/D/19/3234705
6 Churchlands, Bramley, RG26 5DU

- 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 B Field against the decision of Basingstoke and Deane Council.
- The application Ref 19/00483/HSE, dated 15 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 17 May 2019.
- The development proposed is "Householder application for the construction of an extended existing double garage and utility/boot room at the side of the property with attic bedroom accommodation above with dormer windows. Associated internal and external alterations".

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this case are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Background and proposal

4. On 12 March 2019, an appeal decision was issued dismissing proposals at the appeal property for a one and a half storey side extension incorporating existing garage.[1] The current appeal proposal seeks to address the concerns raised in this appeal decision.

5. The proposal is for a one and a half storey side extension. This would incorporate the existing garage and would include a boot room, garage and store on the ground floor and an en-suite bedroom with dressing area above. The first floor would be accessed via the main dwelling and would be served by three dormer windows to the front and rear.

[1] APP/H1705/D/19/3221322

Character and appearance

6. The appeal site comprises a detached dwelling on the north side of Churchlands at the junction with The Street. Churchlands is a small residential cul-de-sac consisting of six large detached properties, set in spacious plots, with mature landscaping being a feature of the area, creating an attractive residential environment.

7. Both the appeal property and the neighbouring dwelling at No 5 benefit from garages to their side elevation; with the garage located on the west elevation of the host property and that at No 5 being on the eastern elevation. This arrangement allows for a generous visual gap between the two storey elements of the respective dwellings, which makes a positive contribution to the spacious qualities of the locality.

8. I acknowledge that the proposal would be smaller, lower and narrower than the previous appeal proposal. However, it would continue to result in a sizeable addition to the side of the property, which would as a result of its width, height and design, compete with the host dwelling. The proposal would fail to appear subordinate in relation to the host dwelling, and harm to its character and appearance would occur as a result.

9. The contribution that the host dwelling makes to the character and appearance of the area would be diminished as a result of the proposal. Moreover, the reduction in the width of the visual gap between the appeal property and No 5, would be eroded by the proposal which would be harmful to the spacious character of this part of Churchlands. In reaching this view, I am mindful that the resultant gap between Nos 6 and 5 would be greater than other properties in the road and would also be wider than that previously proposed, however this does not alter the conclusion that I have reached. Each planning application and appeal must be considered on its own merits.

10. In light of the foregoing, I conclude that the proposal would have a harmful effect upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area in general, in conflict with Policies EM10 (2 a and c) of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (2011 to 2029) (2016) and D2 of the Bramley Neighbourhood Development Plan 2011 – 2029 (2017), which seek among other things, for development proposals to be of a high quality design which positively contributes to local distinctiveness, the sense of place and the existing street scene and have due regard to the density, scale, layout and appearance of the surrounding area and the relationship to neighbouring buildings.

Other Matters

11. The appeal site is located within the Bramley Conservation Area (BCA). Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. It is noted from the decision notice that the Council did not refuse planning permission on the grounds of the impact on the BCA. I also note that the Council's Senior Conservation Officer found that the proposal would cause no harm to the character and appearance of this part of the BCA. On the basis of the evidence before me and from my observations, I concur. The proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the BCA. My conclusion in this regard does not however overcome the harm that I have identified.

12. I note the positive response given to the appellant in pre-application discussions as well as the recommendation to approve planning permission for the appeal proposal given by the Council's Officers. However, the decision of the Council was to refuse the planning application, hence the appeal before me, which I have considered on its merits.

13. My attention has been drawn to a number of extensions to properties in Churchlands. I note that these relate to either single storey or one and a half storey rear extensions and so are not directly comparable to the appeal proposal. The appellant also refers to a smaller side extension granted planning permission at the appeal site, although I have no further details regarding this approval. Consequently, this limits the weight that I can give to these matters in my consideration of this appeal. In any event, the presence of extensions elsewhere does not justify harmful development, such as that proposed.

Conclusion and Recommendation

14. For the reasons given above, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Scott Britnell

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

R C Kirby

INSPECTOR