



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 October 2019 by Ben Phillips Bsc Msc

Decision by R C Kirby BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

An Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/C3620/W/19/3234885

4 Brodrick Grove, Bookham, KT23 4LS

- 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 Katie Quincy against the decision of Mole Valley District Council.
 - The application Ref MO/2019/0605/PLA, dated 29 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 19 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as the erection of new 2 bed. detached dwelling house.
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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 proposed dwelling on:
 - the character and appearance of the surrounding area;
 - the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjacent property at No 18 Lower Shott, with particular regard to outlook, and
 - highway safety with particular regard to off-street car parking provision.

Reasons for Recommendation

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal site is located on the corner of Brodrick Grove and Lower Shott. The area is residential in character with semi-detached and terraced properties displaying similar design characteristics, set back from the highway with a consistent building line. The majority of the dwellings are 2 storeys in height, although there are a number of semi-detached bungalows.
 5. Although the area is built up, it has pleasant spacious qualities as a result of the distance of the dwellings from the highway and the spacious corner plots, such as the appeal site and the property on the opposite side of Brodrick Grove.
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6. The two-storey nature of the new dwelling would be in keeping with the scale of surrounding dwellings and its architectural details would not appear out of place with the locality. However, the detached nature of the dwelling and the small area of open space around it would be significantly at odds with the surrounding pattern of development. Moreover, its prominent siting would unbalance the symmetry of development along Brodrick Grove and would significantly erode the spacious qualities of the locality.
7. In light of the foregoing I conclude that the proposed dwelling would be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, in conflict with Mole Valley Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2009) (CS) Policy CS14 and Mole Valley Local Plan (2000) (LP) Policies ENV22, ENV23, ENV24 which collectively require development to respect and enhance the character of the area. The proposal would also conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) at paragraph 127, which, amongst other matters, requires development to be sympathetic to local character.

Living Conditions

8. The rear wall of the new dwelling would be sited a similar distance from the side elevation of No 18 Lower Shott as the host property. From the side window to No 18, it is likely that the rear elevation of the host property as well as the open area to the side is visible from it. Although the proposed dwelling would be sited on the open area of land to the side of No 4, and would change the outlook from No 18's side window, I am satisfied that there would be sufficient distance between the respective features to ensure that the new dwelling would not be overbearing on the outlook from this window, or to the occupiers using the side of this property.
9. Reference is made to the proposal affecting light to No 18, but I have not been provided with evidence to substantiate this concern. Although the orientation of the new dwelling relative to No 18 may affect sunlight reaching the side of this property in the late afternoon/evening, it would be unlikely to have a noticeable effect over and above the existing situation caused by the existing property.
10. In light of the foregoing, I find that the new dwelling would be unlikely to make the internal living accommodation or outdoor space of No 18 less pleasant to use. The proposal would ensure that the living conditions of the occupiers of No 18 were protected. The proposal accords with the aims of CS Policy CS14 and LP Policies ENV22 and ENV23 which collectively seek to protect living conditions.

Highway Safety and Parking

11. The proposed 2-bedroom property would provide one off street parking space for the proposed dwelling which would be located to the side of the property adjoining the pavement with Lower Shott. The car parking proposed for the new dwelling would conflict with Policy BKH3 of the Bookham Neighbourhood Development Plan 2015-2026 (NDP) which sets out that two off street parking spaces are provided for two and three bed houses. The justification for this policy is that Bookham has more cars and vans per person than Mole Valley and that many of the roads in the area were not designed to accommodate on-street parking.

12. In this case I observed that the roads within the vicinity of the appeal site allowed 2 way traffic. Whilst there were a number of vehicles parked in the road at the time of my visit, I observed that vehicles were able to pass them safely. I acknowledge that Brodrick Grove is likely to be busy at certain times of the day with vehicles and pedestrians travelling from the housing in the area to the A246, to local schools and shops and back. However, no evidence has been provided to demonstrate that on-street car parking within the area causes congestion within the road or has resulted in safety issues to users of the highway. It was noteworthy that each of the properties in Brodrick Grove had space within their curtilages for the parking of vehicles, as did a large number of properties in Lower Shott, close to the appeal site.
13. Accordingly, and in the absence of evidence to demonstrate otherwise, it is unlikely that on-street car parking in the area has reached saturation, or that which does exist has resulted in highway safety issues. Paragraph 109 of the Framework states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. This has not been demonstrated in this case.
14. Given my findings, I conclude that the parking demands that would be likely to be generated by the new dwelling and the host property, whose off-street parking would be displaced by the proposal, would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the flow of traffic in the locality. It is noteworthy that the County Council Highway Officer raised no objection to the proposal. Accordingly, whilst there would be conflict with the parking requirements of NP Policy BKH3, there would be no conflict with the aims of LP Policy MOV 2 which requires development to demonstrate that it is compatible with the transport infrastructure, or the road safety or traffic management objectives of LP Policy MOV5.

Other Matters

15. The Council acknowledges that it is unable to demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites. In this regard the proposal would make a contribution to the supply of housing in the area, in a location that is close to services and facilities including public transport. These matters carry moderate weight in favour of the proposal.
16. However, the harm that would result to the character and appearance of the area would be significant and would conflict with the development plan and the Framework. This harm outweighs the benefits of the proposal and there are no other material considerations which indicate that the proposal should be allowed.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

B Phillips

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

RC Kirby

INSPECTOR