
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 May 2020

by Jonathan Hockley BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 June 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P0119/W/20/3244442

Plough Inn, 68 Wotton Road, Charfield GL12 8SR

- 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 D Hawkins, Tankard Developments Ltd against the decision of South Gloucestershire Council.
 - The application Ref P19/1813/F, dated 15 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 11 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of 2no Semi-detached dwellings and associated works on part of the existing public house car park.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of 2no Semi-detached dwellings and associated works on part of the existing public house car park at Plough Inn, 68 Wotton Road, Charfield GL12 8SR in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P19/1813/F, dated 15 February 2019, subject to the conditions set out at the end of my decision.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this case are as follows:
 - The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area;
 - The effect of the proposed development on highway safety; and
 - Whether the proposed development would provide satisfactory living conditions for future residents, with regards to noise and disturbance.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The Plough Inn lies towards the eastern edge of the village of Charfield and is located on Wotton Road, the main street through the village. At this end of the settlement there is little development on the north side of the road, with development on the south side largely of 2 storey height and located close to the public highway. The Plough Inn itself is a two storey stone built property with extension to side and an unsympathetic porch extension to front. The public house (pub) car park is located to the left hand side and rear of the pub and is a noticeable gap in the street scene of the mainly built up south side of the road. The car park can be accessed directly from Wotton Road or Kings Meadow to the west.

4. The proposal seeks to construct a pair of semi-detached houses on the car park area to the east of the pub. The properties would be set on the same building line as an adjacent property, No 70 Wotton Road, which is a rendered two storey house with various extensions to rear. This would allow a short front yard/garden area before a proposed stone boundary wall with cock and hen top, to match some of the older development in the village, including the congregational church set on the opposite side of Kings Meadow. Proposed materials include a roughcast exterior and dark roof tiles.
5. Since the application that is the subject of this appeal was refused, planning permission has been granted on the site for a single dwelling (the consented scheme). Plans indicate that the consented property has virtually the same footprint and siting as the proposed two dwellings in this case, with a slightly reduced ridge height (although similar eaves height) and the same materials.
6. The ridge height of the proposed property would be slightly higher than No 70, but not noticeably so. The detailing of the properties would be in general accordance with the village vernacular, assisted by the stone boundary wall. While fairly small two bed dwellings, the design and layout of the properties would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the village, and the siting of the dwelling on a similar building line to the adjacent property would match the remainder of this side of Wotton Road and would not harm the street scene, enclosing a section of the open space of the current car park which does not contribute positively to the character of the area.
7. To the rear of the proposed dwellings the plot size is sufficient to allow for private rear gardens of a reasonable length and size, with pedestrian access proposed to access the bottom of the back gardens from logically positioned adjacent parking spaces. Such 3 car parking spaces would form part of a reorganised pub car park, with 7 further spaces for the pub and flat above, and while reasonably tight would appear sufficiently sized to allow for the car parking spaces and proposed dwellings to fit in the site well, without appearing cramped or contrived. The proposed natural stone wall bordering the car park and new proposed gardens would also assist in blending the development into the street scene.
8. As such I consider that the proposed development would have a positive effect on the character and appearance of the area. The scheme would comply with policies CS1 and CS16 of the Core Strategy¹, and PSP1 and PSP38 of the Policies Plan², which when taken together, state that development will only be permitted where the highest possible standards of design are achieved, with siting, form, scale, height, building line, proportions, massing, detailing, colour and materials informed by, and respecting and enhancing the distinctiveness and character of the site and its context, and that housing development is required to make efficient use of land and its density, informed by the character of the local area. The proposal would also comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which states that planning decisions should ensure that developments add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive, sympathetic to local character, and optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount of development.

¹ South Gloucestershire Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-2027, December 2013

² South Gloucestershire Local Plan Policies, Sites and Places Plan, November 2017

Highway Safety

9. The site plan for the proposal contains the site for the proposed houses and the existing car park, but omits the pub, whereas the consented scheme site included the pub as well. As part of the justification for the proposal the appellant proposed to remodel the pub itself to reduce the amount of publicly accessible floorspace within the pub, by re-provisioning an existing front bar area to a bottle store and changing the access from the front to the rear of the pub. On this basis the Council's Transport Engineer raised no objections to the proposed volume of car parking that the scheme proposed, subject to conditions.
10. However, the non-inclusion of the pub within the overall site area led to concerns that the pub floorspace could not be restricted. Concerns are also raised by various local residents and councillors due to the proposed restriction of the access to the site from Kings Meadow, and previous parking issues of pub patrons parking in Kings Meadow itself as opposed to the pub car park.
11. At the time of my visit the works to the pub had been carried out and the space within the pub has been reduced. The Transport Engineer states that this space equates to 24m² and that old standards of the Council would have required 1 parking space per 5m² of floor space, a standard met by the proposal.
12. Policies PSP8 and PSP11 of the Policies Plan and CS8 of the Core Strategy together state that proposals will be acceptable provided that they do not have an unacceptable impact on the residential amenity of occupiers or nearby properties and that car parking and access should be well integrated and situated. Policy PSP16 of the Policies Plan provides current parking standards for residential homes of 1.5 spaces per 2 bed dwelling, a standard which is also detailed in the Council's Residential Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (the SPD) from December 2013.
13. The proposal would therefore provide sufficient parking spaces for the proposed dwellings to accord with policy PSP16 and the SPD, and the Council's Transport Engineer has no objections to the level of parking on site with the remodelled pub in place. While noting the concern of the local residents, I have no reason to disagree with this view and the level of parking provision for the remodelled facility appears to be adequate for a pub located within in a village where some of their custom would presumably come from local residents within walking distance, whether remodelled or not. I also note that the Parish Council withdrew their previous objections to the proposal in the appeal process.
14. No evidence of risks to highway safety from the proposal, either through the use of a sole access to the car park or through the number of car park spaces proposed has been identified and I consider that the proposed development would not have an adverse effect on highway safety. The proposal would comply with policies PSP8 and PSP11 of the Policies Plan and CS8 of the Core Strategy, and with the Framework, which states that patterns of parking should be integral to the design of schemes.

Living Conditions

15. The proposal would result in the provision of two houses within reasonably close proximity to a pub, which could have the potential to create noise and disturbance to the future residents of the proposed houses. Such noise and

disturbance could arise from the pub itself, as well as from noise generated from the use of the car park.

16. However, there would remain a reasonable distance between the proposed dwellings and the pub. The consented scheme was accompanied with an acoustic report which included an environmental noise survey and assessment and concluded that with specific noise mitigation measures in the construction of the proposed property noise could be suitably controlled. This report is submitted with the appeal, along with an update from the acousticians stating that they were of the view that there were no material differences to the location or layout of the buildings which would affect the requirements of a sound insulation scheme or would make the appeal scheme any more sensitive to noise than the consented scheme.
17. On the consented scheme the Council considered a condition to ensure that the proposed mitigation measures would adequately protect the living conditions of any future residents, and I consider that a similar condition would suffice in this case. Furthermore, the remodelling of the pub has isolated to a certain extent the indoor uses of the pub to the area of the building furthest away from the proposed dwelling.
18. I therefore conclude that, with the imposition of a suitable condition, the proposed development would provide satisfactory living conditions for future residents, with regards to noise and disturbance. The proposal would comply with policies CS1 and CS9 of the Core Strategy and PSP8 and PSP21 of the Policies Plan, which together state that the highest standards of design should be achieved in developments which should protect people from unacceptable levels of noise or disturbance pollution. The proposal would also comply with the Framework which states that developments should create places with a high standard of amenity for future users.

Conditions and Conclusion

19. I have imposed the standard conditions relating to compliance with the submitted proposed plan and time for implementation, in the interests of certainty. A condition is imposed requiring a Construction Environmental Management Plan to be agreed prior to works commencing, to ensure that adequate provision is made for contractor parking and the delivery and storage of materials, as well as for temporary car parking for users of the pub, in the interests of the living conditions of nearby residents and highway safety.
20. In the interests of highway safety I have imposed conditions to ensure that the proposed dwellings are not occupied until access and car parking arrangements have been provided in accordance with plans, that details of signage restricting the use of the dedicated parking spaces to the proposed houses is agreed with the Council and for occupation of the properties not to be permitted until the dropped kerb on Wotton Road has been removed. For the first two of such conditions I have added retention clauses to the suggested Council conditions to ensure that the car parking arrangements and signage are retained in perpetuity. In the interests of sustainability, a condition is imposed to ensure secure and covered cycle storage for each dwelling, again with a retention clause, and as above, a condition is imposed to ensure that the dwellings are constructed with appropriate acoustic mitigation in the interests of the living conditions of future residents. This condition is amended slightly from the Council's suggested wording to ensure it relates to both dwellings.

21. To summarise I consider that the proposal would have a positive effect on the on the character and appearance of the area, would not cause harm to highway safety and would provide satisfactory living conditions for future residents. Therefore, for the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Jon Hockley

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF 8 CONDITIONS

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plan: B12051 01 Rev B.
- 3) A site specific Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), shall be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of work. The CEMP as approved by the Council shall be fully complied with at all times. The CEMP shall address the following matters:
 - (i) Adequate provision for the delivery and storage of materials.
 - (ii) Adequate provision for contractor parking.
 - (iii) Adequate temporary on-site provision for public house car parking during the construction period.
 - (iv) Contact details for the Site Manager
- 4) The dwellings shall not be occupied until the access and car parking arrangements for the dwellings and the public house have been provided in accordance with the submitted drawing no. B12051 01 Rev B. Such provisions shall thereafter be retained for the benefit of the occupiers of the approved dwellings at all times.
- 5) The dwellings shall not be occupied until signage in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority has been provided at each residential car parking space stating that the spaces are reserved for residents of the new dwellings only. Such signage shall thereafter be retained for the benefit of the occupiers of the approved dwellings at all times.
- 6) The dwellings shall not be occupied until secure and covered cycle storage for 2 cycles has been provided for each dwelling in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such provision shall thereafter be retained for use by the occupiers of the approved dwellings at all times.
- 7) The dwellings shall not be occupied until the dropped kerb across the existing access onto Wotton Road has been reinstated to a full face kerb

- 8) The buildings are to be constructed in accordance with the appropriate façade mitigation measures in place as described in the Environmental Noise Assessment prepared by Acoustic Consultants Limited, Ref: 7974/SL, issued 16 September 2019.