



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 October 2020

by Adrian Hunter BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/W0340/W/3257645

Land adjacent to Summerfield, The Ridge, Cold Ash, Thatcham

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for consent, agreement or approval to details required by a condition of a planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by T A Fisher Ltd against West Berkshire Council.
 - The application Ref 18/01657/COND1, dated 2 July 2018, sought approval of details pursuant to conditions Nos 4;7;8;10;11;12;13 and 15 of a planning permission Ref 16/02529/OUTD granted on 24 October 2017.
 - The development proposed is outline application for change of use of part of existing agricultural field to residential and the erection of 5 no. detached dwelling houses with ancillary garages, access, parking, landscaping and associated works.
 - The details for which approval is sought are: Condition 4 – External material schedule and samples; Condition 7 – Construction Method Statement for deliveries and site management; Condition 8 – Surfacing for driveways/access points; Condition 10 – Vehicle parking and turning; Condition 11 – Access details; Condition 12 – Cycle storage; Condition 13 – Refuse storage; and Condition 15 – Boundary hedge.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and the details submitted pursuant to conditions Nos 4;7;8;10;11;12;13 and 15 attached to planning permission Ref 16/02529/OUTD granted on 24 October 2017, in accordance with the application dated 2 July 2018 and the plans and details submitted with it, are approved.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal has been lodged on the grounds of the non-determination of the appeal application. Following the submission of the appeal, the Council have confirmed that, had they had the opportunity to determine the appeal application, they would have made a split decision on the application and would have approved matters in relation to Conditions 7, 8, 10, 11, 13 and 15 of Planning Permission 16/02529/OUTD and would have refused details pursuant to Condition 4 (Materials) and Condition 12 (Cycle Storage).
3. Having reviewed the information provided in relation to Conditions 7, 8, 10, 11, 13 and 15, I am satisfied that the submitted information is sufficient to address the requirements of the conditions. I have therefore dealt with the appeal on this basis.

Main Issues

4. The main issues in this appeal are:

- Whether the proposed materials are in keeping with the character and appearance of the area; and
- Whether the proposal makes adequate provision for secure cycle storage.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The condition was imposed to ensure that the proposed development, when completed, would be appropriate to the character of the area, which lies adjacent to the open countryside and the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
6. Policies CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (WBCS) and Policy HSA7 of the Housing Site Allocation Development Plan Document (HSADPD) requires proposals to demonstrate high quality design that respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area and conserves local distinctiveness. The Cold Ash and Ashmore Green Village Design Statement (VDS), despite its age, provides some helpful guidelines and advises that design features should complement the immediate area and that good quality materials, appropriate to the character of the area should be used in new housing development.
7. Within the immediate vicinity of the appeal site and along The Ridge, existing dwellings display a varied style in terms of their design and form. Materials are also varied and include a range of different types and colour of brickwork, render, tile hanging and weather boarding. The design and finish of windows, doors, soffits and fascia boards are also mixed, with either wood or uPVC finish, with colours differing from plot to plot. Therefore, there is no singular particular material or finish which defines the overall character of the area, however that said, most materials appear to be of high quality.
8. The proposed dwellings would be completed in a range of materials and finishes. From the details before me they would reflect and respect the nature and appearance of surrounding developments. The appearance, quality and variety of the proposed materials would ensure the new dwellings would integrate into and complement the existing settlement character and that of its surroundings.
9. For the above reasons, I therefore conclude, that the proposed materials would accord with Policies CS14, CS19 of the WBCS and Policy HSA7 of the HSADPD, the VDS and policies contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).

Cycle Provision

10. Condition 12 was attached to the outline planning permission to ensure that adequate and safe cycle storage space was provided for each dwelling.
11. Policy CS13 of the Core Strategy and Policy TRANS1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan, identifies that to encourage the use of alternative modes of transport, developments should make adequate provision for cycle use, including appropriate storage and parking.

12. It is intended that each dwelling would be served by either a garage or a car port and, within these, there would be sufficient space to securely store cycles via wall brackets. Whilst the submitted garage details do not show the provision of brackets, the details demonstrate that all properties would be provided with a dry and lockable space that would provide sufficient room for the safe and secure storage of cycles.
13. For the above reasons, I therefore conclude that the proposed cycle provision would accord with Policy CS13 of the Core Strategy, Policy TRANS1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan and the Framework.

Other Matters

14. My attention has been drawn to the existing outline consent and the fact that scale and external appearance of the proposed development was a Reserved Matter. At the time the appeal application was submitted, these matters had yet to be approved and, until these are resolved, it is submitted that this should prevent the discharge of any conditions. However, on its own, this is not a justifiable reason for the withholding of approval.

Conclusion

15. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Adrian Hunter

INSPECTOR