
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 January 2021

by S Leonard BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/D/20/3261685

62 Brownhill Road, Chandler's Ford SO53 2EG

- 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 C T Marriner and S P Wood against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council.
 - The application Ref H/20/88152, dated 3 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 21 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is demolition of detached garage and erection of two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property comprises a detached, two storey, modern house with brick walls under a tiled pitched roof. Vehicular access is from Brownhill Road, serving a detached flat-roofed garage to the side of the house.
4. The site lies within a suburban residential area, comprising a variety of different dwelling designs, heights and positioning in relation to the street. Brownhill Road has a pleasant verdant and spacious character, with soft landscaping being a prevalent feature of the street scene, and built development tending to sit comfortably within spacious/soft landscaped plots.
5. The appeal property comprises one of 5 similarly designed, detached houses fronting the road. Whilst not completely identical, they present a strong, regular rhythm of development fronting this part of the road. This stems from their similar roof forms, materials, fenestration positioning, footprint and layout. The rectangular-shaped properties are positioned perpendicularly in relation to the site frontage, behind open plan front gardens, and with driveway parking/garaging to their sides.
6. Built structures to the sides of the houses are limited to single storey garages set back behind the front building line, and car ports. As such, these elements of the properties appear subsidiary to the main dwellings, and enable the retention of distinct gaps to the side of each house. These gaps make a positive

contribution to the spacious character of built development along this part of the road. The front elevations of these 5 houses have a strong vertical appearance, emphasised by a feature band of contrasting materials on the front wall of each property.

7. The regularity of building scale, design and dwelling positioning of this group of houses is clearly evident from the public realm, and forms a distinctive characteristic of the townscape. As such, the appeal property makes a positive contribution to the street scene of this part of Brownhill Road.
8. The appeal scheme, by extending to within close proximity of the side boundary at a full two storey height, would remove the gap to this side of the appeal property. The resulting dwelling would extend almost across the whole width of the plot at two storey height, resulting in an unduly cramped form of development that would be out of keeping with, and undermine, the spacious siting arrangement of this group of houses.
9. The proposed side extension would not appear visually subservient to the existing dwelling, due to its combined width, which equates to more than half the existing width of the house, its shallow setback behind the line of the existing front wall, and its matching eaves height to that of the main roof.
10. The narrow depth hipped roof design, installation of a new front entrance door and the proposed width and positioning of the new front elevation windows would further emphasise the disproportionately large and wide nature of the extension in relation to the host property. The resulting building frontage would be notably more horizontal in design than that which prevails within the group.
11. As such, notwithstanding its matching materials and fenestration design, and some setting down of the extension below the existing ridge line and back behind the line of the front wall of the building, the appeal scheme would appear as a discordant and over-dominant addition to the side of the house. This would significantly erode the original character of the building, rather than being perceived as a subsequent subservient extension to the building.
12. This would detract from the appearance of the property when viewed within the context of this part of the streetscape, harmfully eroding the established pattern of built development along this part of the road to the detriment of the visual amenities of the street scene.
13. Although the appeal site frontage is currently more heavily landscaped than those of the other 4 properties within the similar group, it is still perceived in views from the street as forming an integral part of the regular pattern of built development within this part of the street. The proposed extension would be apparent in views through gaps in the landscaping, including at the site access point. Moreover, whilst the appeal property is partially screened at present, that is not reason to allow development that is unacceptable, and in any event, I cannot be certain that the frontage landscaping would remain.
14. The appellants have drawn my attention to a number of two storey side extension developments within Brownhill Road and close to it. On the basis of the information before me, and my site visit, I find that none of the examples referred to by the appellants are directly comparable with the appeal scheme, including in respect of their detailed design, juxtaposition with neighbouring properties, relationship with the street scene, and townscape context within

which the properties are located. In any case, I must determine this appeal on the basis of the particular circumstances of the appeal site and the character of this part of Brownhill Road, and on the merits of the scheme before me.

15. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. It would therefore be contrary to Saved Policy 59.BE of the *Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review 2001 – 2011* (2009), Emerging Policy DM1 of the Submitted *Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036)* (2018) and guidance within the *Quality Places Supplementary Planning Document* (2011). These policies and guidance, amongst other aims, require new developments to be of a good design, take full and proper account of the context of the site, including the character and appearance of the locality, be appropriate in mass, scale and design in themselves and in relation to adjoining buildings and spaces, and for side extensions to be in scale and balance with the whole of the house.
16. For similar reasons, the proposal would also be contrary to Policies of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (2019), which seek to secure high quality design as set out in Chapter 12.

Other Matters

17. I acknowledge that the proposal represents an amended scheme from that refused under planning application Ref H/20/87166, including a reduction in ridge height, change of roof form, introduction of a front set-back and alterations to the proposed living accommodation. However, this does not alter my findings in respect of the current proposal.
18. I have noted the lack of objections from neighbours, the Parish Council and the Council's consultees. However, this does not affect my above conclusions in respect of the main issue.
19. Whilst the Council has raised no objection to the proposal having regard to living conditions, parking and highway safety, trees, biodiversity and heritage, these are all requirements of the development plan in any case, and do not outweigh my conclusions on the main issue.
20. Whilst I have given careful consideration to the reasons for the appellants' desire to provide additional living accommodation, I am mindful of the advice contained in Planning Practice Guidance¹ that, in general, planning is concerned with land use in the public interest. It is also probable that the proposed development would remain long after the current personal circumstances cease to be material. For these reasons, I therefore find that this factor is not sufficient to outweigh the aforementioned harm that I have found in respect of the main issue and the conflict with the development plan and the Framework.
21. Notwithstanding that the Framework encourages the effective use of land, and requires the Council to approach decisions in a positive and creative way, these matters are not unqualified, and would not address, or outweigh the aforementioned harm I have identified in respect of the main issue.

¹ Paragraph 008 Reference ID 21b-008-20140306 – 'What is a material planning consideration?'

22. Whilst there would be economic benefits arising from the construction of the appeal scheme, these would be limited, given the nature of the proposal, and would not outweigh the harm that I have identified.

Conclusion

23. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Leonard

INSPECTOR