



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 April 2021

By Andrew Bremford BSc (Hons) MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 May 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/R3650/W/20/3263434

Dacklewood, Old Frensham Road, Lower Bourne, Farnham GU10 3PU

- 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 and Mrs Richards against the decision of Waverley Borough Council.
- The application Ref WA/2020/1095, dated 26 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 7 October 2020.
- The development proposed is replacement two-storey dwelling with integral garage following demolition of existing bungalow.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. In support of the appeal the appellant has submitted a new plan¹, which is identical in all respects to the plan² showing the proposed floor plans, roof plan, elevations and street elevation considered by the Council, with the exception that it includes an additional elevation showing the proposed side elevation of the neighbouring dwelling, Birdhurst. I note that the Council has commented on this new plan in terms of its response to the appeal. I am satisfied that the new plan shows a relatively minor change to the development considered at the planning application stage. Consequently, I shall accept the new plan for the purposes of determining the appeal and do not consider that any interested party would be prejudiced from a public consultation point of view.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal upon (i) the character and appearance of the area; and (ii) the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjoining dwelling, Birdhurst, in respect of outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site comprises a semi-detached bungalow, Dacklewood, and a detached garage. It is located on the south west side of Old Frensham Road in a prominent position close to the junction with Cricket Lane and opposite the Bourne Recreation Ground, where the appellant says a substantial two-storey replacement sports pavilion has recently been granted planning permission³

¹ Drawing number 952/06

² Drawing number 952/04 Rev C

³ Local Planning Authority Ref: WA/2017/1142

and will be constructed immediately opposite Dacklewood. The surrounding area is mainly residential in character with a mix of two storey and single storey properties of varying architectural styles. The predominant pattern of development is distinctly loose-knit, with buildings generally well spaced such that even neighbouring buildings of varying size do not overly dominate each other. In this regard, the appeal property, by virtue of it forming one half of a symmetrically balanced pair of semi-detached bungalows positioned some distance from neighbouring buildings, positively contributes to the character and appearance of the area.

5. Whilst the proposed replacement two storey detached dwelling would be sympathetic to the scale and form of many other surrounding properties, as a result of its height and overall large size, it would substantially disrupt the symmetrical appearance of the existing pair of semi-detached bungalows. The unbalanced appearance would be exacerbated owing to the fact that the separation distance between the proposal and the side elevation of the neighbouring property, Birdhurst, would only be around 1.1 metres. The visual disruption caused would not be significantly reduced as a consequence of the subservient nature of the single storey element of the development that would be closest to Birdhurst.
6. The proposed dwelling would be positioned to reflect the existing building line of Birdhurst. However, taking into account that it would be tight to the northern boundary of the site, the development would extend across virtually the full width of the plot. The narrow access driveway to No 10 Old Frensham Road would provide only a limited degree of separation to the neighbouring property, No 8 Old Frensham Road. Thus, notwithstanding that it would be part single storey, as a result of its overall scale, bulk and proximity to Birdhurst and No 8, the proposal would result in a replacement dwelling that would appear cramped within its plot. It would, therefore, be at odds with the existing loose-knit pattern of development in the area where buildings are generally well spaced.
7. Although the proposed dwelling would be positioned around the same distance from the front boundary of the site as the existing property, owing to the prominent location of the site and its size the proposal would, nonetheless, represent a visually dominating form of development readily visible within the streetscene. Moreover, it would, as a result of its bulk and proximity to the side elevation of Birdhurst, dominate the neighbouring dwelling in views from the public domain along Old Frensham Road in the vicinity of the junction with Cricket Lane.
8. The lack of separation distance between the proposed dwelling and Birdhurst would represent poor spatial design within the context that the buildings in the immediate surrounding area are generally well spaced. Consequently, in this regard, the proposal would fail to respect the prevailing spacious pattern of development described above.
9. For the above reasons, the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, it would conflict with the design and layout aims of Policy TD1 of the Waverley Borough Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Policies and Sites 2018 (LPP1); retained Policies D1 and D4 of the Waverley Borough Council Local Plan 2002 (LP); and Policy FNP1 of the Farnham Neighbourhood Plan (NP). Taken together these policies,

amongst other things, seek to ensure that new development is of a high quality and inclusive design that responds to the distinctive local character of the area in which it is located and in terms of scale and form integrates well with the site and complements its surroundings. The proposal would also conflict with the Farnham Design Statement 2010 (FDS), which requires that new development should reflect the special character of the Bourne including the immediate surroundings in terms of the pattern of development.

10. The appellants contend that the aforementioned two-storey replacement sports pavilion will be visually more prominent from wider views. However, I have very little information about this scheme before me including the circumstances upon which it was granted planning permission. In any event, I have determined the appeal proposal based on the circumstances of the appeal site and on the evidence before me. The existence of this other permission does not alter or outweigh my conclusions on this main issue.

Living conditions

11. The proposed replacement dwelling would be close to Birdhurst. However, that part of the development adjacent to the neighbouring property would be single storey in height; the two storey element would be approximately 5.0 metres away from the shared boundary with Birdhurst and would extend only around 2.6 metres beyond the rear elevation⁴ of Birdhurst.
12. Consequently, the two storey element of the proposal, owing to the separation distance involved and taking into account that it would not project a considerable distance beyond the rear elevation of Birdhurst, would not have an overbearing impact upon the outlook from the neighbouring property.
13. The proposed single storey flat roofed rear projection would be adjacent to the conservatory of the neighbouring property. However, taking into account that the side elevation of the neighbouring conservatory is formed by a solid brick wall, with only high level slot windows, this element of the proposal would also not have an overbearing impact upon the outlook from the neighbouring property.
14. For the above reasons, the proposed development would not cause harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of Birdhurst in respect of outlook. Consequently, it would adhere to the living conditions aims of Policy TD1 of the LPP1; retained Policies D1 and D4 of the LP; and Policy FNP1 of the NP.

Other Matters

15. The appellants point out the Government's recent expansion to permitted development rights, whereby additional floors can be added to dwellinghouses, including bungalows. Be that as it may, in my view any such extension would not be as substantial as the proposal now before me and so would not appear as cramped within the plot.

Conclusion

16. In conclusion, whilst the proposed development would not cause harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of Birdhurst, this would not overcome the

⁴ The rear elevation of the conservatory attached to the rear of Birdhurst.

significant harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area.

17. The proposal would be contrary to the development plan as a whole and there are no other material considerations which outweigh this finding.
18. Consequently, for the reasons given above, and taking into account all other matters raised including the representations of support for the proposed development from interested parties, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andrew Bremford

INSPECTOR