



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 February 2021

by N Holdsworth MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/L3815/W/20/3262541

Seahaven, West Strand, West Wittering, PO20 8AU

- 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 Black against the decision of Chichester District Council.
 - The application Ref WW/20/01200/FUL, dated 13 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 14 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing dwelling and construction of replacement dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The effect on the character and appearance of the area; and on the living conditions of neighbouring residents, with particular regard to the privacy of the occupants of the neighbouring property known as Shore House.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. West Strand comprises a range of large detached properties of varying design, with a marine influence due to the proximity of the sea. On the north side of the street the buildings are generally set back from the road in a straight line with large front gardens. This contributes to a spacious and open character.
4. The proposed dwelling would be clad in cedar, projecting a beachside vernacular. This would be an attractive building to look at, fitting in to the varied character of the road and responding well to the prevailing marine environment. The crown roof would not be particularly noticeable from the street, with the eaves line and total ridge height being roughly similar to nearby existing buildings. The bulk of the main building, including its roof and single storey rear addition, is proportionate and uncluttered. Well sized gaps would be retained to neighbouring properties. Were it not for the unduly large garage outbuilding to the front, the proposal would respond well to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
5. Because of its bulk and very close proximity to the main building, the garage would dominate views in to and out of the new house. It would also occupy a disproportionately large part of the front garden, diminishing the open setting

of the main house to a significant degree. Because of its size, it would not be visually subservient to the main building. Consequently, it would be an obstructive feature that appears out of place in relation to the main building and the road.

6. Consequently, when viewed as a whole the development would relate poorly to the proportions of the plot, appearing cramped. It would detract from the spacious character currently exhibited by the properties on the north side of this road. In this respect a good standard of design would not be achieved and there would be unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal therefore conflicts with policies 33 and 47 of the Chichester Local Plan, together with the West Wittering Village Design Statement 2006 and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), all of which seek to achieve good design that respects the character of the area.

Living Conditions

7. The new building would be set close to the common boundary with Shore House. The ground floor side facing windows would be slightly raised but not to such a degree that there would be significant additional overlooking of this neighbouring property. The upper floor side west facing windows would be obscure glazed preventing any actual overlooking. Any perceived additional overlooking would be insignificant when considered against the situation that currently exists on the site. There are other windows in the new building, but these would not lead to harmful overlooking.
8. Consequently, there would be no unacceptable harm to living conditions of neighbouring residents in any respect, with no loss of privacy through overlooking of Shore House or its garden. The proposal does not conflict with policy 33 of the Chichester Local Plan or the relevant parts of the Framework which require new development to respect neighbouring amenity.

Other Matters

9. I have taken in to account the other examples of residential properties close to the site but none of these change my findings on the first main issue. There are some other large front outbuildings along West Strand but these appear as exceptions, and not examples that should inevitably be followed on this site. The subsequent planning approval issued by the Council on the appeal site does not affect my findings on the issues in this dispute. The proposed building would have a better environmental performance than the existing house on the site and would provide improved living conditions for its occupant. It also benefits from local support. However these considerations do not justify the proposal in the face of the harm identified.

Conclusion

10. Whilst the proposal would not result in harm to the living conditions of neighbouring residents, it would lead to unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. It therefore conflicts with the development plan, when it is considered as a whole, and there are no other considerations that outweigh this finding. The appeal should be dismissed.

Neil Holdsworth

INSPECTOR