The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 13 September 2021

by James Blackwell LLB (Hons)

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 October 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/A1720/D/21/3273245
54 Mays Lane, Fareham PO14 2EL

- 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 & Mrs Harris against the decision of Fareham Borough Council.
- The application Ref P/21/0190/FP, dated 4 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 23 March 2021.
- The development proposed is described as first floor extension over garage with cladding and black windows to existing and new for the whole house and black aluminium bifolds to the rear.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Applications for costs

2. An application for costs has been made by Mr & Mrs Harris against Fareham Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. Since determination of the planning application, the 2019 iteration of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) has been superseded by the July 2021 version. Both parties have had the opportunity to comment on the changes. I have therefore determined this appeal with regard to the current version.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a two-storey detached dwelling, which sits on a corner plot at the junction of Mays Lane and Windermere Avenue. A single storey gable protrudes from the main bulk of the property, and comprises a double garage and front entrance which creates an "L" shaped footprint across the plot. This formation means the property has frontages onto both Mays Lane and Windermere Avenue, with corresponding driveway access along both roads. The wider area is predominantly residential in nature and comprises a mixture of house types, including bungalows, chalet bungalows and other two storey properties.

6. Whilst property types in the area are mixed, the closest neighbouring properties to the north of the appeal site (being nos. 56, 58 and 60 Mays Lane) are all modest bungalows with pitched roofs. These bungalows are broadly similar in size and appearance and conform to a coherent building line. This gives them a strong degree of uniformity which contributes positively to the street scene.

7. The front gable of the appeal dwelling follows a similar building line to these bungalows. Its roof also follows a similar pitch and ridge height, which means the roof topography between these dwellings appears consistent. These common features mean that the appeal dwelling assimilates well with the uniformity between the neighbouring bungalows, allowing it to integrate properly with the street scene. Given the prominent corner location of the appeal dwelling, the visual uniformity between these properties is especially apparent when approaching from either direction along Mays Lane.

8. The proposed development would increase the height of the front gable of the appeal dwelling, in order to accommodate a second storey over the garage and front entrance. Given the modest height of the bungalows to the north, the additional height and bulk of the new extension would appear very dominant along Mays Lane, as the front gable of the appeal property would sit substantially higher than the ridge height of these dwellings. As well as disrupting the uniformity shared between the appeal dwelling and nos. 56 – 60, the bungalows would also appear dwarfed by the proposed extension, which would be harmful to the street scene.

9. At second floor level, the proposed development would also introduce floor to ceiling windows across the full width of the gable end of the new extension. This would lead to a significant visual disparity between the fenestration of the appeal dwelling and its closest neighbouring properties to the north, which typically include only a pair of modest windows at ground floor level. Exacerbated by its additional height and bulk, this disparity means the fenestration of the new extension would appear very dominant in the context of its neighbouring properties, which would again harm the street scene along Mays Lane.

10. For these reasons, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with Policy CS17 of the Council's Core Strategy (adopted 2011), which requires new development to respond positively to and respect key characteristics of the area, including scale, form, spaciousness and use of external building materials.

Other Matters

11. In terms of no. 48 Mays Lane, the two-storey gable to the front of this dwelling has a much lesser depth than the development proposed in this instance, which means it integrates properly with the street scene without appearing dominant or incongruous with its neighbouring properties. Whilst I note there are also several houses in the vicinity of the appeal site which are substantially larger than the development proposed in this instance, their neighbouring context is more mixed, which means they can again integrate more effectively without disrupting any degree of shared uniformity.

12. Along Windermere Avenue, houses are typically two-storey which means the frontage of the proposed development which would face out along this road

would assimilate well with this aspect of the street scene. In this respect, the proposed development would partly achieve an objective of the Fareham Borough Design Guidance SPD[1], which recognises the need for development on corner plots to be designed to address all aspects facing the street. Nonetheless, this would not outweigh the harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area, due to the failures of the development to integrate properly with the street scene along Mays Lane.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, and having considered the development plan as a whole, the approach in the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), and all other relevant material considerations, the appeal should be dismissed.

James Blackwell

INSPECTOR

[1] Fareham Borough Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (Excluding Welborne) (adopted 2015)