



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 26 October 2021

by Stewart Glassar BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/L3625/W/21/3269282

29 Woodlands Road, Redhill RH1 6EY

- 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 A Elshaw (Beaufort Homes Ltd) against the decision of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/01212/F, dated 11 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 4 February 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as "the construction of three terrace four-bedroom houses including access road and parking/landscaping."
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. A revised Framework¹ was published by the Government between the determination of the planning application and the appeal coming before me. I am satisfied that this latest version of the Framework does not raise any new considerations in relation to this appeal. The substantive elements thereof remain the same as the previous iteration in regard to the main issues of the appeal.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises an existing detached, two storey dwelling which is said to date from the late 19th century. The majority of houses in Woodlands Road appear to date from a similar period although there has been more recent infill development in the area, including some 'backland' development, and thus there is a variety of property types and styles. Buildings are generally two or three storeys in height and have either a brick or render finish with pitched tiled roofs. Buildings are generally set back within their plots and have low boundary treatments and mature boundary planting, which together with the provision of largely generous rear gardens gives the area a suburban but spacious character to which the appeal site positively contributes.
5. The proposed development would create a terrace of three dwellings in the rear garden of 29 Woodlands Road. The dwellings have been designed to replicate a

¹ National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

similar appearance to the host property, utilising a brick finish with hanging tiles to the first and second floors on the front elevation. The accommodation is provided over three floors, utilising the roof space for bedrooms. A crown roof has been used to try to limit the overall height of the development. However, this arrangement is a consequence of the scale of development and in particular the depth of the building.

6. Access to the houses would run alongside the site's boundary with 31 Woodlands Road and 2 St John's Road. As a result, the host property's rear garden, which is currently well screened and secluded, would be flanked on one side by the access road and by the proposed parking area along much of its rear boundary, altering the feel of the enclosure of this currently generous rear garden.
7. The area to the front of the proposed dwellings would be dominated by vehicular parking and hard surfacing. Thus, private garden space for each of the dwellings would be to the rear. Given that the proposed houses would provide family accommodation, the amount of garden area is somewhat limited, particularly in the case of the middle dwelling. Although 31 and 33 Woodlands Road have limited rear gardens, they are not generally characteristic of the area.
8. The development would be at a higher ground level than the houses on St. John's Road, which back onto the site. The development would present these neighbours with a large flank elevation. Notwithstanding any retained or supplemented planting, the height and depth of the proposed building, together with its proximity to this shared boundary, would result in the scheme being particularly evident and would appear overbearing to the occupiers of 8 and 10 St John's Road.
9. Given my reasoning above, the development would introduce a scale in terms of height, bulk and mass of development which is out of keeping with the more spacious form and character of the area that I have identified above. As such, the development would appear cramped and incongruous to its locality.
10. For these reasons, I find that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area, in conflict with Policies DES1 and DES2 of the Development Management Plan² (DMP), which seek, amongst other things to ensure that developments reinforce local distinctiveness and respect the character of the surrounding area.

Other Matters

11. I acknowledge that the scheme was designed in the light of the appeal decision from 2007. There have also been discussions with the Council's Officers and responses have been provided to consultee comments. The current scheme is therefore said to represent an improvement over the previous proposal. The previous Inspector may not have specifically commented on the height, bulk, scale and mass of those houses on the rear part of the site but nonetheless still found the scheme would result in a very cramped environment.
12. I therefore do not find anything in the previous decision which would conflict with my conclusions. Furthermore, the previous decision, predated the current DMP, is over 14 years old and has various design differences to the scheme

² Reigate and Banstead Local Plan Development Management Plan (2019)

that is before me now. While I have considered the previous proposal and appeal decision in my deliberations, I have dealt with the appeal as it stands on its own merits.

13. The appellant draws my attention to discrepancies between the Council's Planning Officer's Committee Report and their Appeal Statement. However, the Committee Report was written in favour of the application, which the Council's planning committee disagreed with, as is their right to do. The Appeal Statement was written to support the decision of the Council.

Conclusion

14. The proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area in conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

Stewart Glassar

INSPECTOR