



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 December 2021

by Jonathan Manning BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30TH December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/C1760/D/21/3283835

7 Stinchar Drive, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, SO53 4QJ

- 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 Mrs Karen Smele against the decision of Test Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01732/FULLS, dated 10 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 11 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing conservatory and erection of single storey rear extension to form extended kitchen/living area and two storey side extension to provide additional bedroom.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for demolition of existing conservatory and erection of single storey rear extension to form extended kitchen/living area and two storey side extension to provide additional bedroom at 7 Stinchar Drive, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, SO53 4QJ, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/01732/FULLS, dated 10 June 2021, subject to the planning conditions in the attached schedule.

Procedural Matter

2. The appellant has raised concerns with regard to the handling of the application by the Council. However, such matters are not for me to consider as part of the appeal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues of the appeal are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and whether the scheme makes appropriate provision for off street parking.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site is located on the corner of the junction of Stinchar Drive and Irwell Close. Whilst being a corner plot, due to the bend in the road to the north and south of the appeal site, it does not in my view, hold a particularly prominent position in the street scene unless you are in close proximity to the host dwelling.
5. The surrounding area is residential in nature, with a variety of architectural styles, dwelling types and materials. Part of the appeal site is formed by a grass verge that sits between the existing property, its boundary wall and the

pavement. Whilst grass verges between dwellings and/or their boundary treatments are a prominent feature that give the area a somewhat verdant and open character, the size of these vary, with some relatively small. Further, there are some examples in the area of hard landscaping features that sit directly up against the pavement such as the tall boundary fence directly opposite the appeal site on the other side of Stinchar Drive.

6. The grass verge that would be lost to the proposed development is small and, in my view, makes a limited contribution to the overall character of the area. Further, it can be seen from the proposed site/floorplans that there would still be some separation between both the side elevation of the proposed extension and the boundary treatment from the pavement, which would retain some grass verge. The size of the grass verge that would remain is not dissimilar to other examples close by, such as those alongside the side elevations and/or boundary treatments of properties directly to the south of the appeal site on the eastern side of Stinchar Drive, and would still offer a characteristic soft edge to the scheme.
7. I observed on my site visit that when stood looking at the host property, which is where the effect of the proposed two-storey side extension would be most evident, the building line of No. 1 and 2 Irwell Drive sits somewhat forward of the side elevation of the host dwelling. The proposed two-storey side extension would extend the property roughly inline with the front elevations of No 1 and No 2 Irwell Drive. Therefore, the two-storey side extension would not project beyond existing building lines and consequently, would not, in my view, give rise to a discordant enclosing effect in the street scene or cause harm to the openness of the area.
8. The proposed boundary treatment would extend further out past the building line of No 1 and No 2 Irwell Close creating some enclosing effect. However, given its limited height and that it would be located alongside a prominent narrowing of the highway which in itself creates a visually enclosing feature, I consider any effect on the open nature of the area would be minor and not of such significance to cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. In addition, and as set out in the appellant's statement, the grass verge is in the appellant's ownership and it is very likely that a fenced boundary treatment could be erected in the same location as that proposed in any event.
9. Given all of the above, and the variety of architectural styles and dwelling types in the immediate area, I consider the scheme would not appear as a stark or incongruous feature or have an unacceptable enclosing effect. The scheme would therefore not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal therefore complies with Part (a) of Policy COM2 and Policies E1 and E2 (a) & (b) of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan, 2016 (the LP).

Parking provision

10. The scheme would add an additional bedroom to the host property making it 3 bed. Policy T2 of the LP states that parking provision should be provided in accordance with the parking standards set out in Annex G of the LP. This requires, as a minimum, for 2 off street parking spaces to be provided. The host property currently accommodates a garage and a parking space in front of the garage. However, the garage does not conform to the size standards set out in the LP and therefore the scheme only offers one space.

11. Policy T2 does, however, allow parking provisions below the set standards in certain circumstances. These include where there is likely to be low demand for parking and the supporting text at Paragraph 9.15 notes that this could include where there are genuine alternative modes of transport such as accessible public transport. The appellant's statement notes that there is close access to a bus service from the appeal site in the form of Bus Route 43 (Flexford) which runs adjacent to Stinchar Drive, which I observed on my site visit. Further, Chandler's Ford train station, which has direct routes to Romsey, Southampton and London is approximately a 12-minute walk away. On this basis, I am satisfied in this case that genuine alternative modes of public transport exist to warrant parking provision below the set standards and the scheme complies with Policy T2 of the LP.

Other Matters

12. I understand that two trees on the grass verge were felled shortly before or during the planning application process. The Council's tree officer replied to the planning application consultation and noted that whilst this had taken place they were not subject to a tree preservation order and the appeal site is not within a Conservation Area, so had no objection to the scheme. It is therefore clear that the trees were not protected, and the appellant was free to fell them.
13. Concern has been raised that the ecology assessment is inaccurate as the proposed development is within 40 metres of historic broad-leaved woodland. I have limited information before me to determine whether this is the case. However, it is clear to me that the grass verge is of very limited ecological value and consequently, I am satisfied that there would be no adverse effects on any statutory or locally designated sites of wildlife importance, or any legally protected or notable habitats or species.

Conclusion and Conditions

14. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the scheme complies with the development plan taken as a whole. The appeal therefore succeeds.
15. As a result, there is a need to consider what planning conditions are necessary. As well as the standard time limit condition (1), a condition is necessary to ensure the development is undertaken in accordance with the approved plans to secure certainty (2). Condition (3) is needed to ensure the suitable appearance of the scheme.

Jonathan Manning

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Planning Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site Location (inc Site Plan) Ref: 143-001 (Rev P2) and Proposed Layout (Floorplans and Elevations) Ref: 143-101 (Rev P3).
- 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building unless otherwise set out in the planning application form.