
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 April 2022

by J Ayres BA Hons, Solicitor

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 June 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C3620/W/21/3284135

Sole Farm Cottage, Stone Hill Close, Bookham KT23 3DY

- 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 Handley of Duhan Developments Ltd against the decision of Mole Valley District Council.
 - The application Ref MO/2021/0488/PLA, dated 12 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 5 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing house and erection of a pair of 3-bedroom semi-detached bungalows, with access and parking.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for demolition of existing house and erection of a pair of 3-bedroom semi-detached bungalows, with access and parking at Sole Farm Cottage, Stone Hill Close, Bookham KT23 3DY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref MO/2021/0488/PLA, dated 12 March 2021, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site lies within the defined settlement of Bookham. It is a generous plot surrounded by existing residential development which varies in respect of its scale and character, creating a mixed built environment. The proposal would replace the existing large, detached dwelling with a pair of three bedroom semi-detached dwellings. Whilst the level of built form on the site would increase overall, the two dwellings and their respective amenity space would be incorporated comfortably due to the existing generously sized plot. The individual design elements, to include small dormers and gables, with a barn hipped roof, would create an attractive scheme that would bridge the grain of development between bungalows and larger two storey dwellings.
4. To the front of the houses there would be areas for parking and turning, which is currently laid out as hardstanding. Properties in the area generally benefit from a mixture of hard and soft landscaping to the front of individual dwellings. This creates a more balanced character which actively enhances the character

of the area. I consider that in this case, it would be necessary for the proposal to contribute to the character in order for it to settle entirely into its site and I note the appellant's willingness to incorporate landscaping into the scheme to achieve this.

5. Whilst the amenity space would be less than that serving the properties in the immediate vicinity of the site, through out the area the size of plots varies considerably. Individually the dwellings would be afforded a good level of space, and the site in its entirety would retain space around the built form.
6. I find that the proposal would be an efficient use of the site, and would provide well designed housing for the community. It would comply with policy CS14 of Mole Valley Core Strategy, and policies ENV22, ENV23 and ENV24 of the Mole Valley Local Plan, and policies BKH2 and BKEN2 of the Brookham Neighbourhood Plan. Collectively these policies seek to ensure that development is appropriate to its site in respect of scale and character and that it respects its context and surroundings.

Living conditions

7. The proposal would be closer to the boundaries of the site than the existing dwelling. However, the design of scheme would ensure that the bulk of the built form would be set back from the boundary and having regard to the generous garden areas of neighbouring properties, the built form would not be overly oppressive or result in a detrimental loss of light or outlook to neighbouring occupiers.
8. Bookham is a well-established residential area, and the layout and orientation of the streets as the area has developed has resulted in some modest levels of overlooking which are naturally associated with settlements. The existing dwelling has a window in the first-floor elevation facing towards the boundary of the site. The proposed building would be in excess of seven metres from the boundary facing the garden area of the neighbouring property, and I am satisfied that the glazing element serving the front bedrooms would not result in overlooking of such a magnitude as to seriously erode the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.
9. The car parking area to the front of the site would be used for the existing dwelling and therefore the site has always historically generated noise associated with its residential use. The increase in traffic associated with the access and egress of an additional dwelling would not be of the level to create significant increases in noise and movement.
10. Overall, I find that the proposal would not harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. It would comply with policy ENV22 of the Mole Valley Local Plan and policy BKH2 of the Bookham Neighbourhood Plan, which amongst other things require development to not significantly harm the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring occupiers.

Conditions

11. The approved drawings should be specified in the interests of certainty. To ensure a satisfactory appearance and to ensure that the site does not increase the risk of surface water flooding, details of external and surfacing materials and planting should be agreed. Conditions relating to energy use and electric charging are necessary to ensure energy efficiency for the development. A

condition requiring layout of parking is necessary to ensure that the site can be safely accessed and does not result in harm to highway safety.

Conclusion

12. The proposal would accord with the development plan and there are no other considerations to outweigh this finding. Therefore, for the reasons given, the appeal is allowed.

J Ayres

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 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 Plan 20941/200
 - Existing site plan 20941/102
 - Proposed block plan 20941/101 Rev A
 - Tree Protection Plan 21 1958 TPP 001 Rev 1
 - Elevation views showing neighbouring properties 20941/130 Rev C
 - Proposed elevations 20941/110 Rev B
 - Proposed floor plans 20941/120
 - Proposed roof plan 20941/111
 - Proposed landscaping plan 20941/100
- 3) No development other than site investigation and survey work shall take place until details and samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 4) No development other than site investigation and survey work shall take place until details of the hard surfacing to be used within the site, which shall include details of soft landscaping within the area to the front of the dwellings, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall indicate either porous materials or the provision of a direct run-off from the hard surface to a permeable or porous area. All hard surfacing shall be carried out, and soft landscaping provided, in accordance with the approved details, completed prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted and thereafter, permanently retained as such.
- 5) No development other than site investigation and survey work shall take place until details to reduce the carbon emissions of the predicted energy use of the development hereby permitted by at least 10% through the on-site installation and implementation of decentralised and renewable or low-carbon energy sources have been submitted to and approved by the

Local Planning Authority and be implemented prior to the first occupation of the dwellings.

- 6) The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied unless and until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with the approved plans for vehicles to be parked and for vehicles to turn so that they may enter and leave the site in forward gear. Thereafter the parking and turning areas shall be retained and maintained for their designated purposes.
- 7) The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless and until each of the proposed dwellings are provided with a fast charge socket (current minimum requirements - 7 kw Mode 3 with Type 2 connector - 230v AC 32 Amp single phase dedicated supply) in accordance with a scheme to be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter retained and maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority

END OF SCHEDULE