

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 June 2022

by G Powys Jones MSc FRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 30th June 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/L3815/D/22/3290812

Land to south of Tranjoeen, 1 Field Maple, Bracklesham Lane, Bracklesham, Chichester, PO20 7JE

- 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 Harry Morley against the decision of Chichester District Council.
 - The application Ref EWB/21/03279/FUL, dated 22 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 14 January 2022.
 - The development is described as proposed vehicle crossover; means of access to a highway Class B
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site lies in the countryside, and is of a rectangular shape, being part of a former large field since subdivided into plots or enclosures. The hedge which once grew on the field's lengthy highway frontage has been ripped up and removed in its entirety, although some tree stumps are still apparent in the ground.
4. A timber rail fence has been constructed along the frontage, and this is punctuated by several accesses onto the highway, including the one subject of this appeal. The fence is separated from the highway by a newly formed green sward, and the embryo of a replacement hedge is evident alongside the fence.
5. Contrary to the indication given in the application form the works of forming the access have commenced. The appellant, in effect, seeks retrospective permission for the formation of the access onto the classified B road, and for the creation of a vehicular crossover in permanent materials.
6. I have noted the references to the planning history of the adjoining land, including a recently dismissed appeal.¹ This indicates to me that various consents have been sought for the development of the larger field in piecemeal

¹ APP/L3815/W/20/3261808 dated 28 April 2021.

fashion, but no permissions, as I understand it, have been forthcoming. This piecemeal approach is continued with this appeal which in effect asks me to consider the development in isolation from the use and development of the larger field.

7. I noted during my visit that several plots or enclosures have been formed by the use of fencing of a type more usually seen as means of enclosures on suburban residential estates. I saw too that at least two caravans were sited on the larger field. As already mentioned, several accesses onto the B road are evident.
8. The works as a whole have given rise to significant alterations to the previously pleasant rural scene and to my mind constitutes a visual intrusion. The works subject of this appeal have contributed in part to the harmful changes in the local scene.
9. I therefore conclude that the development has and would contribute to a significant and harmful erosion of the rural qualities of its surroundings. Accordingly, a clear conflict arises with those provisions of policies 45 & 48 of the Chichester Local Plan which seek, amongst other things, to ensure that development proposals respect the local landscape character and do not result in an adverse impact on the tranquil and rural character of the area.

Other matters

10. I note that the Highway Authority did not object since the submission of a revised plan satisfied it that lateral visibilities were acceptable. However, I see no signs that the issue of multiple accesses onto a busy road had been considered. I describe the road as busy on the basis of what I saw during my site visit, which was conducted during the morning rush hour. Although not forming a reason for refusal, the consideration of this particular access point in isolation represents a symptom of the consequences of what I consider to be unacceptable piecemeal development.
11. The permission sought is for operational development and not in respect of the change of use of the land. I note the Council's concerns and comments as to the proposed use, but in the absence of any further detailed information on useage, I make no comment on this aspect.
12. I have taken account of all other matters raised in the representations including the views of the Parish Council, who call for a more comprehensive approach to be adopted to development proposals affecting the larger field. The Council's views are broadly consistent with mine. No other matter raised outweighs those considerations which led me to my conclusions.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above, the appeal is dismissed.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR