



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 December 2022

by C Butcher BSc MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/D1265/W/22/3303250

1 St. Peters Close, Pimperne, BLANDFORD FORUM, DT11 8UZ

- 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 and Mrs Peters against the decision of Dorset Council.
 - The application Ref P/FUL/2021/02760, dated 1 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 23 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is the erection of 1 No. dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. In order to ensure that the description of development is as clear as possible, I have changed it to match the description used within the Council's officer report.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located close to the edge of the village of Pimperne, within the settlement boundary as set out within the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1, January 2016 (LP). The immediate area contains a range of dwellings of various ages. St Peters Close itself is a development of relatively large post-war semi-detached houses which surround a number of smaller bungalows. On the other side of Church Road is a recently constructed development of large modern homes with an area of green open space that occupies the corner of the site, immediately opposite the appeal site. To the north of St Peters Close is the village hall and a playground.
5. While there is therefore little conformity with regard to the age and style of the various buildings in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site, the pervading character of the area is one of spaciousness and rurality, and there is a close relationship with the landscape within which the village is located.
6. On approaching the village along what is assumed to be Church Road, the rear gardens of numbers 1-6 St Peters Close can be glimpsed due to the fact that the topography of the land rises gently uphill to the east. It is clear that there is a uniformity to the gardens, and their generous size adds to the verdant nature of the immediate area. Despite being partly obscured by a wooden

fence, the garden to No. 1 is in a particularly prominent location being adjacent to Church Road which is one of the main routes into the village.

7. The proposed dwelling has been designed to minimise its visual impact, in particular by making it partly subterranean and including features such as a sedum roof and living wall. However, the submitted plans show that it would still be clearly visible from Church Road, including from the new access which would provide views of the building and the gravel driveway. As such, the proposal would heavily disrupt the existing rhythm and openness of the rear gardens of 1-6 St Peters Close.
8. In addition, due to the small plot size, the proposed dwelling and its garden would appear cramped and 'squeezed in' and therefore out of keeping with the character of nearby properties. There would also be a knock-on effect of making the garden to the host property much smaller, which again would not conform with the surroundings.
9. Overall, I conclude that the proposed development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area, contrary to those aims of Policies 4, 7 and 24 of the LP.

Other Matters

10. Both the LP and the Pimperne Neighbourhood Plan, October 2018 identify the need for new homes in the area, including smaller units. However, the provision of a single dwelling would only make a very limited contribution to these needs, and I have therefore attributed little weight to this issue.
11. The proposed dwelling has a number of sustainability credentials, including being built to Passiv-Haus standards. While this is to be commended, and such designs are encouraged by policies within the Framework, this does not overcome the harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area.
12. I note that the appellant has sought to draw my attention to another recently built contemporary home on Arlecks Lane. However, the nature of that location is quite different, being well within the built-up area of the village, and surrounded by other properties. It is therefore much less prominent than the appeal site.
13. The appeal site lies within the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Given the limited nature of the proposed development, and the fact that it would not extend the built form of the village, there would be no harm caused to the setting or scenic beauty of the AONB.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Butcher

INSPECTOR