



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 May 2023

by J Reid BA(Hons) BArch(Hons) RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/L3815/W/22/3307791
43 Marine Close, West Wittering PO20 8HG

- 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 Stephen Walsh against the decision of Chichester District Council.
 - The application Ref WW/21/03110/FUL, dated 22 October 2021, was refused by notice dated 28 March 2022.
 - The development proposed is demolish existing dwelling and erect a replacement dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Reasons

2. The main issue is the effect that the proposed development would have on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
3. The appeal site is situated within a mainly residential area, towards the roughly west end of a row of mostly detached dwellings on the south side of the narrow Marine Close. The site backs onto the seashore, with the coastal footpath running close by. To roughly east is the mostly 2-storey dwelling at 41 Marine Close and to roughly west is a twitten leading to the beach. Beyond the twitten lies the barn-hipped chalet style dwelling at 45 Marine Close, which is behind the chalet style dwelling at 24 Marine Close on the south west corner of Marine Drive and Marine Close. The existing bungalow would make way for the proposed 2 storey plus attic dwelling.
4. The dwellings in Marine Close are mixed in age and style, and include bungalows, chalet style and 2 storey dwellings in a range of materials and finishes. On the north side, most dwellings face the road beyond their front gardens and/or drives. On the south side, most dwellings are sited beyond subservient garages and parking spaces to face the sea. Due to the low-key forms of the bungalows and chalets, and the sympathetic design of most replacement dwellings, the important skyline openness on the seaward side of the road, which contributes positively to the local seaside character, has largely been maintained. As Marine Close turns roughly north by the site to join Marine Drive, the site is prominent in seaward views along the nearby north south parts of those roads.
5. The site is within the South East Marine character area defined in the West Wittering Village Design Statement 2006 (DS), which includes the coastal strip

reached from the Marine Drives and Close, and suburban development which extends inland. The DS has some relevance, but since it was produced several dwellings close to the beach have been extended or replaced by larger dwellings, and Marine Close is no exception. Even so, due to its width, and the relationships of the dwellings and their outbuildings to the road, Marine Close has a more intimate character than in most other parts of the character area.

6. The proposed dwelling would nearly fill the width of the site, so the dwelling's 2 tall linked and staggered parallel ranges at roughly right angles to the site's frontage would look squeezed in on the site. Each range would be little deeper than the main parts of the dwellings at 41 and 45 on either side, but in most views the dwelling would appear to be much larger and more bulky than its neighbours. As its west range would be closer to the road than the main parts of the dwellings at 41, 39, 37 and 35 Marine Close, the dwelling would be unacceptably intrusive in westward views along Marine Close.
7. The proposal's main ridges and eaves would be taller than the main ridge and eaves at 41. So, in contrast to the low pitched single gabled form at 41, where the main roof's eaves are lower than the first floor window heads, and the roughly single storey height main eaves at 45, the twin gabled dwelling, with the roof slope spanning between the gables, would be harmfully bulky at first floor level and above. Several nearby dwellings include first floor balconies, but from the beach the roof level terrace would look incongruous.
8. So, due to its bulk, scale, height and form, the dwelling would be unacceptably dominant and oppressive in views from the nearby streets, the twitten and the shore. It would harmfully intrude into the important seaside openness in the seaward views down the nearby north south stretches of Culimore Road, Marine Drive and Marine Close. Within Marine Close the dwelling would contrast starkly with the elegance of the dwelling at 20 almost opposite, the ordered proportions of 31, and the simplicity of 41, all of which show that replacement dwellings can be successfully integrated without eroding the sense of place.
9. There are 2 flat roofed up to 4 storey apartment buildings beyond Marine Close to roughly east and there are 3 floor dwellings including 2 storey dwellings with rooms in their roof spaces in other nearby streets along the coast. However, most of those dwellings are sited further from the roads, and their site specific circumstances differ from those of the proposal before me.
10. Therefore, I consider that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would be contrary to Policy 33 of the Chichester Local Plan: Key Policies 2014-2029 which seeks a high standard of design and respect for context, and the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) which aims to achieve high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places, and for development to be sympathetic to local character and to maintain a strong sense of place.

Conclusion

11. I have found that the proposed development would be contrary to the Development Plan when taken as a whole. The other considerations in this case, including the Framework, do not outweigh that conflict. For the reasons given, the appeal should be dismissed.

J Reid INSPECTOR