



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 September 2023

by Juliet Rogers BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/N1730/W/23/3318270

2 Salmons Road, Odiham, Hook, Hampshire RG29 1NY

- 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 J Hewitt-Dutton against the decision of Hart District Council.
 - The application Ref 22/01746/FUL, dated 4 August 2022, was refused by notice dated 28 November 2022.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single dwelling house and associated landscape, parking and access.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a narrow strip of currently undeveloped and overgrown land located in the wide gap between the existing properties of No 2 and No 3 Salmons Road. Other properties located on the road comprise two-storey semi-detached and terraced dwellings, with the occasional detached form. Red brick and plain tile roofs are commonplace, with the selected use of hung tile cladding, whilst the age and architectural style of properties differ.
4. Buildings are set back various distances from the road, although smaller front gardens are present and the staggering of building lines is less prominent on the appeal site side of the road compared to those opposite. Additionally, dwellings have wide frontages on the appeal side of the road, often with large gaps between the pairs of semi-detached dwellings, which contribute to the spaciousness of the area. Furthermore, several buildings on the opposite side of Salmons Road are sited at a perpendicular angle to the road, further emphasising the informal and open character of the street scene.
5. These characteristics largely reflect those identified in the Hart Urban Characterisation Study (the HUCS) within Area C: Inter-War 'Garden City' housing. Although not within a Conservation Area or adjacent to any Listed Buildings, the HUCS provides guidance for development in Area C including the need to protect its architectural unity and for new housing to maintain the staggered building lines and rhythm of plot frontages present.
6. The proposed development includes a two-storey detached dwelling sited marginally back from the building lines of No 2 and No 3, with broadly similar

ridge and eaves heights. The proposed development would have a significantly narrower building and plot frontage than found elsewhere in the street. Whilst I note that other properties in the street have been extended and although amendments were made to the overall depth of the proposed dwelling during the determination period of the application, it would also be deeper than other dwellings in the street. In combination with the narrower frontage, this would result in a substantially smaller plot and garden size and would be out of keeping with the prevailing pattern of development in the area, despite the presence of other small plots nearby including Nos 33-36. Furthermore, the siting of the dwelling in the large gap between No 2 and No 3 would erode the sense of space and cause harm to the informal open character of this part of Salmons Road.

7. Despite the use of matching materials and complementary architectural design and detailing, due to its narrow building and plot width, the proposed development would introduce an incongruous feature into the established pattern of development in the street. Even if I were to conclude that the proposed development would not cause harm to the landscape setting and character of the area and that additional planting could be secured by a condition, this would not alter the overall form proposed nor the harm it would cause.
8. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Policy NBE9 of the Hart Local Plan (Strategy & Sites) 2032 (the Local Plan) and Policy GEN1 of the Hart Local Plan (Replacement) 1996-2006 Saved Policies (the Saved Plan). Whilst positive, both these policies require development that, amongst other provisions, promotes, reflects and incorporates the distinctive qualities of its surroundings including any locally distinctive street patterns, layout, siting and scale. It would also conflict with Policy 5 of the Odiham and North Warnborough Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2032 (the Neighbourhood Plan) which sets out the key design principles for a new development including the need to integrate with the locality.
9. Finally, I find conflict with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which seeks to ensure good design that is sympathetic to the local area.

Other Matters

10. Notwithstanding the appeal site's location within the settlement boundary of Odiham, where Policy SS1 of the Local Plan considers the principle of new dwellings to be appropriate, this is subject to compliance with other development plan policies. As I have found that the proposed development would be contrary to other development plan policies, the appeal scheme's relationship to the settlement boundary does not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area I have identified.
11. Despite the broadly supportive advice received from the Council in response to the scheme submitted at the pre-application¹ stage, this comprised a wider plot and dwelling frontage than the appeal scheme, thereby similar to the prevailing pattern of development. Nonetheless, pre-application advice is not binding on the Council in determining subsequent applications.

¹ Council ref 22/00220/PREAPP dated 15 February 2022

12. I have been referred to an approved planning permission² for a similar form of development on the site. Although considered acceptable by the Council, this scheme includes a substantially wider plot and building frontage than the appeal scheme. As a result, the approved dwelling would more closely reflect the established pattern of development in the street, even if it would provide a deeper building, at ground floor level. As such, this approved scheme does not justify permitting unacceptable development.
13. My attention has also been drawn to an outline planning permission³ for a 60-bed care home and 30 dwellings and another planning permission⁴ for 16 dwellings following the demolition of a dwelling at West Street. While these schemes are located close to the appeal site, they are of a significantly different scale to the proposed development. Given this and their relationship to the surrounding patterns of development, these schemes provide the opportunity to establish a sub-character whilst respecting the distinctive of the wider area. In comparison, due to the limited size of the appeal site, fewer opportunities exist to integrate the proposed development into the distinctive qualities of the area. Therefore, irrespective of any similar plot widths, these planning permissions do not alter my decision.
14. Even if I were to conclude that the proposed development would not harm the living conditions of existing and future occupiers in terms of amenity space, daylight, sunlight, outlook and bin storage, these would be neutral factors in my decision. Similarly, concluding that the proposed development would not prejudice highway safety with suitable vehicle and cycle parking provided, and is located in an area of low risk of flooding would also be neutral factors. Similarly, the proposed development's compliance with other development plan policies and the lack of objections from the Council's Biodiversity Officer following the submission of a Provisional Environmental Assessment, do not weigh in favour of the grant of planning permission.
15. I note the local support for the proposed development demonstrated within the petition signed by many of the existing residents of Salmons Road. However, this support does not justify allowing unacceptable development.

Conclusion

16. The proposed development conflicts with the development plan when considered as a whole, and there are no material considerations, either individually or in combination, that outweigh the identified harm and associated development plan conflict. Therefore, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

Juliet Rogers

INSPECTOR

² Council ref 03/01624/FUL dated 23 December 2003

³ Council ref 21/00777/OUT dated 20 September 2022

⁴ Council ref 19/02541/FUL dated 10 June 2021