



## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 September 2023

**by N Praine BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 17 October 2023**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/H1705/W/23/3317988**

**3 Kingsclere Road, Overton RG25 3JA**

- 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 Pym against the decision of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.
  - The application Ref 22/01166/FUL, dated 19 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 6 December 2022.
  - The development proposed is described as the redevelopment of a bungalow to provide a two storey dwelling and pool house with access from Kingsclere Road.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area including the Overton Conservation Area (the CA).

### Reasons

3. As one travels from Winchester Road across the High Street, the historic core of the CA is fully appreciated. Buildings are broadly of increased scale and are grouped closely together. However, as the journey continues along Kingsclere Road toward the River Test, a looser knit urban grain and lower scaled built environment is experienced on the same side of the road as the appeal site.
4. Once the River Test is crossed, this reduction in built form is further emphasised by the existing modestly scaled appeal site and the adjacent neighbouring clinic building. The modest height of these buildings highlights the subordinate role they play within the landscape and creates an important sense of space to this side of the road.
5. The reduction in both scale and built form makes a valuable contribution to the transitional nature of this side of the road as one moves from the Historic Core, past the chain linked fenced tennis courts and into the tranquillity of the open environs, and St Mary's Church beyond. This reduced scale is also important as it contrasts the existing built form to the other side of Kingsclere Road opposite the appeal site.
6. The significance of the CA is derived in part from these existing vistas between the Historic Core and the transition across the River Test into the semi-rural open space of the Church and Environs, particularly to this side of Kingsclere

Road. Therefore, the views of the appeal site and its surroundings as a transitional setting make a valuable contribution to the CA.

7. The width of the proposed dwelling would be akin to the existing dwelling and it would be set back within the site following the same building line as the existing building. However, the proposed dwelling would significantly increase in ridge height, eaves height and depth when compared to the existing development. It would also incorporate a gable frontage feature and a crown style roof.
8. While there is some screening around the site, clear views of the proposed dwelling would be possible from Kingsclere Road through and across the access as well as glimpsed views from other adjoining land.
9. The in-combination effect of these features, when read in the historic and landscape context of the immediate area, would result in a development which would have a cramped appearance and would dominate the appeal site. For the same reasons the bulk and massing of the proposed development would also adversely erode the lower scaled nature of this side of Kingsclere Road.
10. While there are examples of two storey development to the other side of Kingsclere Road, these are not experienced in the same way as the appeal site. The appeal site and the space around it is different as they provide an appropriate counterpoint or 'breathing space' at the edge of the Historic Core.
11. The proposed dwelling's height, bulk and mass would not be subordinate to the landscape and would unacceptably harm the transitional nature of this side of Kingsclere Road between the Historic Core and the Church Environs.
12. 'Test View' sits near the appeal site on this side of Kingsclere Road. It has a pitched and ridged roof and sits on higher land. While the total height of the proposed dwelling may be lower than 'Test View', the change in land levels, its gable frontage and crown roof would cause it to have an unacceptable bulk and mass when experienced from the street scene.
13. The existing appeal building has limited architectural merit; however, this would not justify its replacement with a visually harmful building. In addition, the detailed design of the proposed dwelling would be somewhat confusing as it incorporates some Georgian features but also contemporary features too.
14. The crown roof would be particularly harmful as it is not clear how this proposed design responds to the local context. It has not been sufficiently demonstrated how the significance of the heritage asset and its setting has informed the design of proposed development. This would compound the harm I have identified above.
15. Overall, the proposed dwelling would detract from both the integrity of the Historic Core and the Church and Environs Character Areas unacceptably harming the transitional pattern of development to this side of the road.
16. The pool house would be of more modest scale and would be sited in a less conspicuous part of the appeal site. The extent and appearance of hardstanding could be controlled by landscaping conditions. These in isolation would have a reduced impact upon the character or appearance of the CA.

17. However, for the reasons given above, the proposed development would consequently fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area including the CA.
18. Paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework ("the Framework") advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
19. Given the limited scale of the proposal I find the harm to be less than substantial in this instance but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight. Under such circumstances, paragraph 202 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
20. There would be social, environmental, and economic benefits. However, the quantum and scale of these benefits would not outweigh the importance and great weight given to the conservation of the heritage asset. I therefore conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area including the CA.
21. The proposal would conflict with the relevant provisions of Policy EM1, EM10 and EM11 of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan 2011-2029 (2016) ("the Local Plan"), Policy LBE1 of the Overton Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2029 (2016), Heritage Supplementary Planning Document (2019), Key Design Principle SS1 and HQB 1-4 of the Basingstoke and Deane Design and Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (2018) and the Framework. These, amongst other things, seek to preserve or enhance the significance of the character or appearance of the area including heritage assets.
22. I have not referred to Policy SS6(d), New Housing in the Countryside, of the Local Plan as this policy deals with development proposals for new housing outside of Settlement Policy Boundaries. I say this as the Officer's Report confirms the development site is located within the Settlement Policy Boundary for Overton. While I have not referred to this policy, it does not change my overall decision.

### **Other Matters**

23. The Framework indicates that permission should be granted, unless the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed. The application of heritage policy provides that to be the case here. As such, the proposal would not be the sustainable development for which the Framework indicates a presumption in favour.

### **Conclusion**

24. As a result, the proposal is contrary to the development plan as a whole and there are no other material considerations of sufficient weight to indicate a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*N Praine*

INSPECTOR