
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 June 2024

by C Shearing BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P1750/D/23/3332128

14 Fleet Road, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 9RA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Gorvett against the decision of Rushmoor Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 22/00746/FULPP.
 - The development proposed is described as 'demolition of existing outbuildings and erection of single storey ancillary accommodation annex.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Council considers that the proposed development could be capable of independent use, given its size and the facilities it would contain. Nonetheless, I have considered the proposal on the basis of the description of development for which the appellant applied since, if the appeal were to be allowed, it would be this for which planning permission was granted.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on (i) the character and appearance of the area, and (ii) highway safety, with particular regard to parking.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The character of the wider area is predominantly residential, comprising properties of varying age and appearance. Number 14 Fleet Road is one of a group of properties which front onto Fleet Road but have relatively long and narrow rear gardens which extend towards Minley Road to the north. The northern end of those gardens abut the edge of Minley Road and contribute to the open character close to its junction with the roundabout.
5. This group of gardens are bound to the west by a group of tall conifer trees and they appear as typical residential gardens, over which the rear elevations of properties on Fleet Road can be seen from Minley Road. They include areas of hard surfacing for parking of vehicles as well as a number of low level structures such as sheds and car ports including those on the appeal site. However, these do not rise significantly higher than the surrounding boundary treatments, have limited visibility from the surrounding area and appear typical of a garden setting.

6. By contrast, the proposed building would be substantially larger in both its footprint and height than other structures which exist within this group of gardens. Its eaves level would sit consistently above the height of the surrounding fencing and its building materials would be akin to those of the main house rather than a garden structure. When considered in combination, these factors would result in the development appearing visually prominent in views from Minley Road and around the junction, and heavily at odds with the character of this group of gardens and the surrounding pattern of development.
7. For these reasons the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with policies DE1 and DE11 of the Rushmoor Local Plan 2019 (the LP) which require among other things, that development respects the character and appearance of the local area, and is not harmful to the character of the area in terms of relationships and integration with existing buildings and spaces and impact on the street scene.

Highway Safety

8. The proposal would entail the removal of the existing car port at the back of the site, which is currently used for storage. Three off street parking spaces would remain at the front of the site with access onto Fleet Road, although one space could not be accessed independently.
9. While the introduction of further sleeping accommodation within the proposal could potentially increase car ownership and use at the site, the Council accept that the quantum of off street car parking spaces would be suitable for a house of this size and that its parking standards are a maximum. For these reasons, and as I have considered the proposal on the basis of the description of development above, the proposal would be acceptable in this regard.
10. The proposal would therefore be acceptable in terms of its parking provision and would not cause harm to highway safety as a consequence. It would comply with Policy IN2 of the LP insofar as it requires development to provide appropriate car parking provision.

Other Matters

11. The proposal would make use of previously developed land in an established built up area, and there would be some economic benefits arising from the construction process and on going expenditure into the local economy by its occupants. However, given the scale of the proposal and as it would be ancillary to the main house and occupied by family members, these benefits would not amount to considerations of sufficient weight to outweigh the conflict found with the development plan. While the proposal may be policy compliant in other respects, for example in terms of its effects on the nearby protected tree and on the living conditions of nearby occupants, these matters are neutral and do not weigh in favour of the proposal.
12. The Council's third reason for refusal relates to the effect of the proposal on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA), which is designated for its importance to bird populations. The appeal site is within 5km of this SPA, which is an area where residential development has been identified as having potential effects on its ecological integrity, and Policy NE1 of the LP relates to the effects of net new dwellings. Notwithstanding this, Regulation 63(1) of the

Habitats Regulations¹ indicates the requirement for an Appropriate Assessment is only necessary where the competent authority is minded to give consent for the proposal. As the appeal is dismissed on other grounds it is not therefore necessary to address this in any further detail.

Conclusion

13. The proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations which outweigh this finding. Therefore, for the reasons given, the appeal is dismissed.

C Shearing

INSPECTOR

¹ The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017