



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 June 2024

by H Faulkner BSc (Hons) MSc PGCE MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 August 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/W/23/3335959

Land rear of 22-24 Granville Road, BH12 3BG, Poole BH12 3BG

- 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 Coastline Homes (Bournemouth) against the decision of Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council.
 - The application Ref is APP/23/01195/F.
 - The development proposed is Construction 4no. 1 bedroom bungalows with associated pedestrian access and landscaping.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Applications for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Coastline Homes (Bournemouth) against Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. The appellant submitted details of an approval for three detached bungalows on the site which was issued on the 4 July 2024. I have had regard to this, as necessary in my determination.
4. A signed Unilateral Undertaking (the UU) dated 24th June 2024 was provided by the appellant and copied to the Council. The UU is for financial obligations in relation to Dorset Heathlands Harbour Strategic Access Management and Monitoring and Poole Harbour Strategic Access Management and Monitoring contributions. The Officer Report stated that a suitable undertaking had been submitted and the relevant contributions paid. The UU covers the mitigation contributions and in further correspondence the Council accepted its suitability. In my assessment of the appeal I have accepted that matters of mitigation have been dealt with.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area; and
 - whether the development would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants, with particular regard to outlook and floor space.

Reasons

Background Matters

6. The site has previously been granted two planning permissions for residential development. The first for a scheme of three terraced houses with a smaller footprint and sited further back into the plot was approved in 2019¹. In July 2024² permission was given for three detached bungalows without parking. Details of the first approval were submitted with the appeal and the second at a later date. The Council has been provided with the opportunity to comment on both approvals.

Character and appearance

7. Granville Road is a predominantly residential street made up of semi-detached properties which vary to some degree in style and size. Houses generally follow fairly clear building lines although there are some exceptions. Plot sizes on the west side of Granville Road are broadly similar with long rear gardens. There are some outbuildings and houses to the rear.
8. The principle of back land development in this location is accepted and the scale of the houses is not inappropriate particularly as they are set down within the site. However, the narrow frontages and small plot sizes are inconsistent with the prevailing character and would appear cramped in comparison. They would be closer to the houses on Granville Road than the approved terrace and without gaps between the properties would have a less spacious appearance. Although the parking area has been removed and there would be larger front gardens and additional landscaping the overall openness at the front is reduced, with cycle and refuse stores taking up additional space.
9. When compared to the previously approved terrace scheme the increased depth and narrower frontages appear more cramped and out of character. The detached bungalow scheme for three houses would have a more spacious layout and therefore would fit more comfortably on the plot. The appeal scheme is therefore materially different to the approved scheme which would have significantly less harm on the character and appearance of the area.
10. A number of other sites are referenced by the appellant. However, no details have been provided in terms of where these are in relation to the site and limited context is provided. None are on Granville Road itself or the immediate surrounding streets and therefore comparisons are not able to be made in terms of the character of the area.
11. The examples of 19 and 50 Maureen Close, 11 Rosemary Road and 407 Ringwood Road have different layouts to the appeal site. The examples at 57-59 and 63 - 67 Rosemary Road whilst showing dwellings to the rear of a row of houses the sites are longer and there is little detail on the context of the development in terms of scale. Limited detail is provided on the context of 81 and 84 Rosemary Road and the suitability of back land development here may differ to the appeal site. The example at land to Brixey Road is for a much larger site with a more spacious arrangement. Consequently, they are not directly comparable to the appeal site before me.
12. Policy PP8 of the Poole Local Plan (PLP) advocates a variety of housing types and styles in sustainable areas and Policy PP2 encourages high densities on transport

¹ Reference APP/19/00978/F

² Reference APP/23/01471/P

corridors. Even if the scheme were consistent with these policies the fact that the proposals are out of keeping with the pattern of the surrounding area is determinative in this instance.

13. The erection of a terrace of four bungalows on this plot would appear out of character with the surrounding area in terms of the cramped nature of the site due to the increased plot coverage and the inconsistent form of the buildings and their plot size. The proposal does not reflect or enhance local patterns of development and the increased density would have a detrimental impact. The proposal would therefore cause harm to the character and appearance the area and conflict with Policies PP2, PP27 and PP28 of the PLP.

Living conditions for future occupiers

14. The proposed bungalows would each have one bedroom located at the front and the living area located at the rear. With gardens to the front and rear.
15. The houses would be sited closer to Nos 22 and 24 than either of the approved schemes. Given the change in levels along with the position of the large refuse and cycle stores a poor outlook from the properties, particularly from the front windows of units 1 and 2, would result. The effect would be oppressive and overbearing. This effect is compounded by the fact that there are only two habitable rooms available, thus, providing a poor living environment.
16. In terms of the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) Planning Policy Guidance states that Decision takers should only require compliance with the NDSS where there is relevant current Local Plan policy. The Council has not adopted the NDSS into its development plan as part of Policy 27. As such, compliance with this cannot be required and any deficiency, in comparison to the standard, can only be afforded limited weight. However, the NDSS is a material consideration, and its requirements provide a useful starting point for the assessment of this proposal, particularly as the relevant policy refers to the provision of satisfactory internal amenity space.
17. The bungalows appear of an appropriate size for a one bed one person unit under the NDSS although no details have been provided to demonstrate the room sizes or storage requirements have been met. However, they are insufficient in size to meet the one bed two person standard. Whilst the size would be appropriate for a single person the appellant argues that even if the bungalows were occupied by two people there would be sufficient space. Another appeal decision is referenced however no details are provided to enable comparisons to be drawn. No mechanism has been suggested to restrict the occupancy of the properties and it would be difficult to ensure that they were only ever occupied by one person.
18. Even if the space were considered to be of a sufficient size the poor outlook provided creates an environment which would not result in acceptable living conditions for future occupiers. The development is therefore contrary to Policy 27 of the PLP which seeks to protect the amenity of future occupiers.

Other Matters

19. The site is located within the 5km Zone of Influence of the Heathland Special Protection Area as well as being in an area where an additional dwelling would have an impact on the Poole Harbour SPA and Ramsar site. The need for mitigation is not disputed by the appellant and a UU was submitted which the Council considers provides for the appropriate level of mitigation. On the evidence before me, I have

no reason to disagree with this assessment. If the circumstances leading to a grant of permission had been present, I would have given further consideration to this in accordance with the Habitats Regulations. However, as I am dismissing the appeal on the main issues above I have not found it necessary to consider this matter any further as it would not alter my decision.

20. The concerns raised by interested parties in respect of overlooking, highways/parking, biodiversity, and drainage are acknowledged. However, based on the evidence provided there is no reason to disagree with the Council's conclusions on these matters.
21. The Council's final comments make reference to the potential loss of a tree. There is no reference to a tree in any of their other evidence and no tree is shown on the plans. No trees of significance were observed during the site visit and it has not been determinative in my consideration of this appeal.

Planning Balance

22. For the purposes of this appeal the Council do not dispute that they cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing land. Consequently, the presumption in favour of sustainable development in paragraph 11 d) ii. of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) is engaged by virtue of footnote 8. Paragraph 11 d) i. is not applicable. Therefore, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole.
23. In its favour, the proposal would provide an additional house in an accessible, established residential location and would reuse land and make more efficient use of the site as well as providing additional housing choice. Due to the extant consents in place the proposal would result in the net gain of one dwelling. Given the current shortfall this would make a negligible difference to housing supply and therefore carries limited weight.
24. The policies in the Framework seek to both deliver a sufficient supply of homes and achieve well-designed places. However, the creation of high quality places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. That would not be the case here.
25. The benefits of the scheme would be limited given the scale of the development and the adverse impacts I have identified in terms of the character and appearance of the area and living conditions are prevailing and would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework, taken as a whole. As such the proposal would not represent sustainable development.

Conclusion

26. The proposed development would conflict with the development plan, when read as a whole and there are no other material considerations, including the provisions of the Framework, that outweigh this finding. Therefore, for the reasons given the appeal should be dismissed.

H Faulkner

INSPECTOR