
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 December 2025

by **SE Hughes BA (Hons) PGDip MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/R0335/W/25/3370637

Camelot, High Street, Little Sandhurst, Sandhurst, Berkshire GU47 8LJ

- 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 Miss Liann Wintermeyer against the decision of Bracknell Forest Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00282/FUL.
 - The development proposed is a change of use from amenity land to driveway use, with new surface finishes.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I saw during my site visit that a gravel driveway had been provided to the front of the appeal property to the public highway. This appears to be in accordance with the plans before me. I have therefore considered the appeal on the basis that the change of use of amenity land to driveway use has already taken place.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area and highway safety.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site is located in a residential development dating from approximately the 1960s to the north of the High Street in Little Sandhurst. From the High Street/School Hill junction to the High Street/Sandy Lane junction, the 1960s development either has an open frontage or is offset from the High Street by a relatively continuous swathe of green open space, which makes a positive contribution to the street scene.
5. Whilst the triangular open space in front of the appeal property was broken up by the property's access path, so did not serve a recreational function, it contributed to the verdant visual character of the area, as a continuation of the adjoining green open space. Consequently, the hard landscaping to provide a driveway access has detrimentally reduced the area's verdant character.
6. I have noted the appellant's submissions that the triangular area was previously in poor condition, which has improved as a result of the appellant's management,

however, this does not overcome the harm that has resulted to the character and appearance of the area as a result of the loss of the green open area.

7. I have considered the appellant's submissions about the loss of amenity land to provide private gardens, accesses and car parking at other properties in the street. However, in the case of the creation of garden spaces, they are not comparable to the appeal development, as a grassed area of approximately 4m in depth has been retained next to the highway. With regards to the other access driveways, with the exception of 23 High Street, which differs in that it has a shorter less conspicuous frontage which has reduced its visual impact, the properties are not part of the 1960s development. Consequently, they have a different architectural character and layout so are not directly relevant to the appeal development.
8. I have also considered the appellant's points regarding problems with the rear access via Prince Drive and the appellant's desire to improve access for her disabled father and emergency services attending to her daughter's ongoing medical conditions. However, I have no further detail or explanation of these matters nor any robust evidence that the rear access route is an unrealistic option for the appellant's family members or emergency services, or that there is no alternative means of improving the rear access.
9. In view of the above, I conclude that the development results in harm to the character and appearance of the area. This is contrary to Policies LP 28, LP 30 and LP 50 of the Bracknell Forest Local Plan 2020-2037 (BLP), which among other things require development to respond to and enhance the character, amenity and/or appearance of the local area and protect and enhance the Borough's green infrastructure.

Highway safety

10. The appeal site is located on the inside of a bend in the High Street, opposite the School Hill junction. At the time of my site visit, there was an intermittent flow of traffic along the High Street.
11. Whilst no traffic survey evidence has been provided as part of this appeal, the Highway Authority have indicated that the triangular area forms part of the visibility splay for the Prince Drive/High Street junction and offers forward visibility through the bend on the High Street.
12. The driveway was clear from parked vehicles when I visited, however based on the plans before me and the standard car parking space dimensions¹, the driveway could accommodate 2 cars. In the absence of any information to the contrary, I have considered the appeal on this basis.
13. Whilst there would be sufficient turning space to allow 1 car to turn around and exit in a forward gear, this would not be the case if the driveway was used for 2 cars. Furthermore, the use of the drive for 2 cars (parked in tandem or side by side) would overhang the retained boundary hedge of the property, obstructing forward visibility through the bend on the High Street and visibility at the Prince Drive junction. Therefore, I agree with the Highway Authority that the development is to the detriment of highway safety.

¹ 2.4m x 4.8m reference Bracknell Forest Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document March 2016

14. The High Street is a 30mph limit road and has speed bumps in place to reduce traffic speeds. However, located opposite the driveway of Victoria House close to the High Street junctions with School Hill and Prince Drive and adjacent to the street's only public footway, there is significant potential for confusion and conflict as a result of the convergence of manoeuvring motorists. Consequently, I find that the development has also increased the risk to the safety of all highway users (drivers and pedestrians).
15. Whilst the appellant has suggested that visibility for users of the driveway could be improved by installing a driveway mirror, this would not assist the forward visibility of drivers proceeding east along the High Street or those at the junctions of Prince Drive and School Hill.
16. Given that the land in the appellant's control has already been cleared of its boundary trees and hedges, I disagree that the visibility splays could be further enhanced through landscaping.
17. I have also considered the appellant's suggestion to install tactile paving or appropriate highway signage, however, I do not consider that this would mitigate the appeal's failings in respect of its position in the context of other nearby junctions and the access opposite and the hazard it poses to the safety of other drivers and pedestrians.
18. For these reasons, the development is to the detriment of highway safety. This is in conflict with Policy LP 25 of the BLP, which requires development to prevent negative impacts to highway safety. In addition, it is contrary to paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which states that if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, development should be refused.

Other Matters

19. The development has local support from some neighbours. The appellant suggested that it has improved local parking, relieving congestion and highlights that the permeable surface reduces water runoff. However, these matters are neutral considerations, therefore are insufficient to outweigh the development's fundamental harms outlined above.
20. I have had due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) contained in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which requires me to consider the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. Protected characteristics include a person's disability. The negative impacts of dismissing the appeal arise since the dwelling would not be provided with a front driveway access as sought. However, this impact is mitigated by the existing access to the rear and the possibility of an alternative scheme to improve the rear access to meet the needs of disabled access. As such, having due regard to this, and to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, in my view the adverse impacts of dismissing the scheme on those with protected characteristics would be proportionate, having regard to the reasons discussed in the main issues.

21. Reference has been made to the ownership of the triangular open space. However, land ownership is a matter that falls outside the planning regime. Accordingly, it has had no bearing on my assessment of the planning issues in this appeal.

Conclusion

22. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the development is in conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations that would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

SE Hughes

INSPECTOR