The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 October 2010

by Mike Robins MSc BSc(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 1 November 2010

Appeal Ref: APP/X1735/A/10/2129277
16 Stroudwood Road, Havant, Hampshire PO9 2HX

- 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 M & J Bradwell against the decision of Havant Borough Council.
- The application Ref 10/68180/001, dated 23 February 2010, was refused by notice dated 21 April 2010.
- The development proposed is construction of a new 2-bedroom dwelling.

Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal.

Procedural Matters

2. For clarity I have shortened the description of development given on the application form. The appellants have submitted a signed and dated Section 106 obligation, under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, to address transport contributions; I have taken this into account in my assessment of this case.

Main Issue

3. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is to the side garden of a terraced property which sits in a large corner plot. It forms part of a very large residential estate which spreads either side of the nearby Petersfield Road, the B2149, and is of a very consistent age and style. The host property is typical of dwellings within the estate, comprising as it does a small end terrace property in a block of six. Such terraces are commonplace throughout the estate and form the predominant building form. In this case the terrace is further defined by small gable features on each end property.

5. The estate, despite the relatively dense housing, has been set out with significant areas of public space and so retains an open character and spacious appearance. This is underpinned by the treatment of corners and junctions across the area, where wide road verges and larger corner plots reinforce the character and provide attractive open vistas. The consistent layout and rhythm of the estate arises from similar design approaches and well defined building lines, which in most cases return around corners to align side elevations of the end terraces with the front elevation of those in adjoining roads.

6. While I accept this is not universal across the estate, it is nonetheless a defining characteristic which would be eroded by the introduction of an additional property here. The proposal would also further reduce the width of the corner junction, introduce housing closer to the road and reduce the views into and out of Lockerley Road. This is a prominent location, open to views from the main road and the estate opposite, and a property here would be incongruous and materially harm the character and appearance of the local area. This would be compounded by extension of this particular terrace beyond the end properties which are defined by their front gable features.

7. While I accept that the impact may be limited in relation to the wider estate, the cumulative harm of such developments would result in a significant and detrimental change to the character and appearance of the area. The scheme would therefore fail to comply with Policy D1 of the Havant Borough District-Wide Local Plan, adopted 2005, (the Local Plan) in this regard. This policy seeks development of a high quality of design which respects and enhances local character. National guidance has increasingly addressed the necessity for high quality developments and considers that design which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area should not be accepted.

8. I am directed to other schemes the appellants suggest form precedent for this proposal. Each scheme, however, must be considered on its own merits and I consider there are material differences between this proposal and some of the other schemes suggested. The appellants, however, point to three they suggest are particularly relevant and which I was able to view during my site visit.

9. The nearby extension to No 2 Abbbotstone Avenue is located at the opposite end of the row of terraces. While this does extend into a corner plot, it is subservient to the main property and does not breach the building line along Stroudwood Road. The pair of properties across the junction of Stockheath Way and Batterns Way are similar in some respects to the proposal here, however, I consider that not only is the building line around the corner less defined, but the predominant form is different with semi-detached properties prevailing, changing the character of the estate here. Finally, the proposal for a property at Holybourne Close, decided on appeal[1], is again similar but the opposing corner layout differs and the end of the existing terrace does not reach to the alignment defined by the properties along Chilcombe Close. Consequently, I do not consider that these establish any form of precedent sufficient to overcome my concerns regarding the harm arising from this proposal.

10. Turning to other matters, the evidence of the Council is that a financial contribution is required in respect of transport. This has not been challenged and a Unilateral Undertaking has been submitted. From the information before me the need for this contribution arises from new houses in line with Circular 05/2005 *Planning Obligations*. This obligation would address the Council's second reason for refusal, and the proposal would therefore comply with Local Plan Policies IMP1 and T10 in this regard. This matter does not, however, outweigh the concerns I have identified above.

11. I note the appellants' view that this would represent a more efficient use of land and be supported by national planning guidance. However, recent changes to Planning Policy Statement 3 – *Housing*, although not preclusive of the use of

[1] App/X1735/A/06/2021335

garden land for development, nonetheless removes any weight that arose in its favour due to the prior classification as previously developed land.

12. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Mike Robins

INSPECTOR