

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 July 2017

by Michael Evans BA MA MPhil DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 26th July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/B9506/D/17/3174801

Cartref Cottage, Ringwood Road, Stoney Cross SO43 7GN

- 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 J Dent against the decision of the New Forest National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref 16/01075 was refused by notice dated 27 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a new double garage with loft storage and the replacement of an existing wooden outbuilding with a new timber clad masonry workshop.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction of a new double garage with loft storage and the replacement of an existing wooden outbuilding with a new timber clad masonry workshop at Cartref Cottage, Ringwood Road, Stoney Cross SO43 7GN, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/01075, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1504/TP.01, 1504/TP.02, 1504/TP.03, 1504/TP.04 and 1504/TP.05.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) The garage and attached workshop hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes incidental to the residential use of the dwelling at Cartref Cottage and shall not be used as habitable accommodation such as kitchens, living rooms and bedrooms.

Main issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, designated as part of the New Forest National Park and located within the Forest Central (South) Conservation Area.
 - The effect of the proposal on the supply of smaller dwellings.
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Reasons

Development plan policy

3. Policy CP8 of the New Forest National Park Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD, December 2010, states that built development and changes of use which would individually or cumulatively erode the Park's local character or result in a gradual suburbanising effect within the National Park will not be permitted. The aims of Policy DP1 include that development should be of a high quality design, as well as being appropriate and sympathetic in terms of matters such as scale and appearance.
4. The explanatory text to Policy DP11 defines small dwellings as those with a floor area of 80 sq m or less. Its aims include seeking to retain a stock of smaller dwellings by preventing extensions to small dwellings from resulting in a total habitable floorspace exceeding 100 sq m. Policy DP10 has a similar aim but is concerned with the replacement of dwellings, which is not being proposed in this instance. Policy DP12 indicates that domestic outbuildings will be permitted subject to being within the residential curtilage, being required for purposes incidental to the use of the dwelling and not providing additional habitable accommodation.

Character and appearance

5. The appeal concerns a detached property built to replace an existing dwelling following planning permission granted in 1988. Immediately to the north there is another property, Cartref Lodge, which is of a similar style and appearance, with a further dwelling, Beecroft, to the east. These properties are part of the dispersed development in the locality which is set in open countryside.
6. The site is located in the Stoney Cross character area, as defined in the Authority's Forest Central South Conservation Area Character Appraisal. It is indicated that there is very little built development within the character area. It is said that the buildings appear to predominantly date from the early 20th century with very few earlier buildings in evidence. It is also explained that the design and character of the later 20th century development generally does not reflect the local distinctiveness and vernacular of the wider Conservation Area.
7. The proposed single storey workshop outbuilding would be attached to the eastern side of the host dwelling and appear as an addition. It would not therefore add to any sense of clutter that might arise from the creation of physically separate buildings. The detached garage would be located to the other side on a hardstanding between an 'L' shaped stables building and the house itself. The garage would be a single storey building with storage space in the roof. A relatively low eaves level and partly hipped form would significantly limit its bulk. Both of these structures would be of fairly modest bulk and mass, being subordinate to the associated dwelling due to their noticeably lower heights and reasonably modest footprints. They would also be subservient to the adjacent dwelling to the north.
8. The resultant number of outbuildings at the site would not be excessive. Furthermore, the size of the site would be sufficient to retain a fairly spacious character. The garage would also reduce the likelihood of visual clutter arising from the parking of cars in the open. As a result of these factors there would be no sense of clutter or undue proliferation of buildings. Moreover, the

proposed structures would not be overly dominant, with no detrimental effect arising on the open and rural character of the surrounding area.

9. The New Forest National Park Landscape Character Assessment is said by the Authority to indicate that modern development should be avoided where it would be out of keeping with the local vernacular. The Authority describes the existing dwelling as being of modern suburban appearance. Nevertheless, the development would most readily be seen in relation to the host property and the dwelling immediately to the north which is also of a comparable style.
10. The new garage would be fairly similar to that at the adjacent property with brick walls, a tiled roof and partly hipped form. It would also be compatible with the host property and that at Cartref Lodge. The addition to the eastern side would be clad with timber similar to the existing workshop and have a basic rectangular plan form and gabled end. In this context I consider the resultant fairly simple and plain appearance of the garage and workshop to be acceptable and appropriate to this rural location.
11. Due to the above factors, the development would not adversely affect the landscape of the surrounding open forest or the character of the host dwelling. It is concluded that the character and appearance of the surrounding area would not be harmed with that of the Conservation Area being preserved. There would also be compliance with the aims of DPD Policies DP1 and CP8.

Small dwellings

12. The property at the appeal site resulted from the replacement of a small dwelling and the Authority points out that its floor area already exceeds 100 sq m. It is suggested in the second reason for refusal that the proposed workshop would be likely to further increase the amount of habitable floorspace in excess of this figure. The Authority's concerns are that the workshop would be subsumed into the habitable floor area of the dwelling so that it is clearly not being argued that the workshop itself comprises a habitable space.
13. The supporting text to Policy DP12 indicates that habitable floorspace includes living rooms, bedrooms and kitchens. Moreover, it also specifically suggests that a condition can be imposed limiting the use of outbuildings to purposes incidental to the dwelling and excluding any use as habitable floor area. In this case there would be no internal access between the new workshop and the attached dwelling which would be functionally separate.
14. As a result, despite factors such as the more solid nature of the structure than that to be replaced, its greater height and the presence of two windows, the new workshop need not result in any additional habitable floor area. In consequence, there would be no conflict with Policy DP11 regardless of the fact that the existing workshop to be replaced was built without planning permission. It is concluded that there would be no adverse effect on the supply of small dwellings. The proposal would be located within the curtilage of the dwelling, be used for an incidental purpose and not provide habitable accommodation, therefore satisfying Policy DP12.

Other considerations

15. The fairly modest size and scale of the workshop addition would prevent any adverse effect on the living conditions of the adjacent occupiers at Beecroft due to matters such as visual intrusion. I am also not persuaded that use of the

door facing the boundary would result in any significant impact in the context of the incidental domestic use of the new workshop. There is no technical evidence that accepting the development would have any significant implications for the use of the shared access track to the property. Although not a matter for me to determine, the Authority indicates that use of the dwelling for care purposes does not comprise a change of use as the number of residents does not exceed six living as a single household.

Conclusion

16. Taking account of all other matters raised, there is no reason to reject the proposal given the absence of harm and the appeal succeeds. In reaching this decision I have considered the views of neighbouring residents and the Parish Council.

Conditions

17. To comply with Policy DP12 a condition concerning incidental use and preventing use as habitable space should apply to both the garage and workshop. In addition, a condition specifying the approved plans is necessary to provide certainty. The facing materials used should match those of the existing dwelling to protect the appearance of the area.

M Evans

INSPECTOR