
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 November 2019 by AJ Sutton BA Hons DipTP DMS MRTPI

by R C Kirby BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/H1750/D/19/3236367

Hill House, Down Street, Dummer, Basingstoke, RG25 2AD

- 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 & Mrs David Craven against the decision of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01234/HSE, dated 3 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 8 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as an 'Extension and alteration to garage block'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Dummer Conservation Area (DCA) and nearby listed buildings.

Reasons for Recommendation

Dummer Conservation Area

4. Hill House is a large detached dwelling set in a well screened sizeable plot, centrally located in a well-preserved village. The pattern of development in the village can be described as irregular, comprising dwellings of differing sizes and styles. The appeal site has an elevated position in comparison with neighbouring properties. It is wholly within the DCA, with three listed buildings situated close to the appeal site, on the opposite side of Down Street.
5. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (1990 Act) requires me to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. In this respect national policy on heritage assets, which includes conservation areas, is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework). At paragraph 192, it sets out matters which should be taken into account including sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

6. The appeal site falls within Area 3 of the DCA, where important features are identified as the semi-rural character of the area which is formed in part by the spacing of dwellings as well as publicly visible trees and hedges within gardens. In particular, the spacious quality of the looser knit pattern of development on the eastern side of Down Street, of which the appeal site forms part, is considered to provide a contrasting character to the grouping of listed buildings opposite.
7. The existing garage contributes little to the appearance of the appeal property, however, its low profile ensures that it is not prominent in the street scene. The new garage would be much higher than the existing garage and would introduce a significantly larger structure with an uncharacteristic roof form which, being elevated above the road would result in the development being unduly prominent in the immediate street scene. It would result in a noticeable spatial change to this part of the conservation area. Its design would not make a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of this attractive rural area and harm to the character and appearance of the area would result.
8. I therefore conclude that the proposal would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the DCA and accordingly conflicts with Policies EM10 and EM11 of the Basingstoke & Deane Local Plan 2016, the Basingstoke & Deane Heritage Supplementary Planning Document 2019 and the Framework which collectively require all development to be of a high quality which positively contributes to local distinctiveness, sense of place and existing street scene, and conserve or enhance the quality of the Borough's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, respecting historic form and setting. The proposed use of appropriate materials would not offset this harm.
9. Whilst the harm to the significance of the DCA would be less than substantial paragraph 196 of the Framework states that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The development would be for personal use and I have nothing before me which would indicate any public benefits which would outweigh this harm. Accordingly, there are no public benefits of the proposal which outweigh the harm that would be caused to the conservation area. The scheme therefore conflicts with the Framework in this respect.

Nearby Listed Buildings

10. Section 66(1) of the 1990 Act requires that when considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, special regard shall be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
11. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, paragraph 193 of the Framework advises that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or from development within its setting.
12. There is a cluster of three Grade II listed buildings comprising Lime Tree Cottage, The Wellhead and Well House located on the western side of the street opposite the appeal site. Collectively they have been identified as having

key significance to the historic and visual interest of the village. They are particularly notable when viewed as a grouping from the north. I observed that Down Street provides clear severance between this picturesque cluster and the appeal site.

13. Accordingly, whilst the proposed development could be observed from these heritage assets, it would be physically and visually separate from them being closely related to Hill House. The proposal would not diminish the significance of these heritage assets or their setting and as such I conclude that the listed buildings and their settings would be preserved. My findings in this regard do not outweigh the harm identified to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Conclusion and Recommendation

14. For the reasons outlined above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

A J Sutton

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and concur that the appeal should be dismissed.

RC Kirby

INSPECTOR