
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 January 2020

by Nick Davies BSc(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/B1740/D/19/3237020

21 Parsonage Barn Lane, Ringwood BH24 1PS

- 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 Graeme Giles against the decision of New Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/10536, dated 23 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 24 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is ground floor extension to rear and extended new cut roof forming 1st floor. Also, pitched roof to existing garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - a) The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area; and,
 - b) The effect of the development on the living conditions of the occupants of 19 Parsonage Barn Lane, with regard to outlook and light.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is one of a row of six detached bungalows at the northern end of Parsonage Barn Lane. They are all set back on the same building line, behind enclosed front gardens. Apart from No 25, which lies at the southern end of the group, there is a marked consistency in their design. They all have rendered walls, plain-tiled hipped roofs to their front elevations, and bay windows. Their similar roof pitches result in a uniformity of roof height across the group. Although No 25 lacks the bays, has brick walls, and has a gabled roof, it is similar in height and scale to the other five bungalows. They have all been altered to some extent; two have modest dormers in their front hipped roof and others have had significant extensions to the rear. Nevertheless, they retain a cohesiveness as a distinct group in a street that is, otherwise, of a varied character.
4. The proposals involve an extension to the rear, with a new roof over the entire bungalow to accommodate a first floor. Although the appellant contends that the roof height would not be out of place in the street scene, the increase in the pitch of the roof would result in its ridge being noticeably higher than the

other five in the row, which would be disruptive to the uniformity of the group. The proposed cropped gable to the front elevation would be a prominent and discordant feature in a street scene that is characterised by hipped roofs. Furthermore, weatherboarding is not a distinctive material of the locality, and the vertically proportioned first floor window and juliet balcony would further emphasise the uncharacteristic nature of the proposal. As a result, the proposal would be harmful to the cohesive appearance of the street scene.

5. I am aware that the Ringwood Local Distinctiveness Supplementary Planning Document (2013) (the SPD) states that Parsonage Barn Lane is characterised by extremely varied dwelling types. However, it also recognises that, sometimes, groups of bungalows along its length offer a strong sense of openness. The appeal site falls within one of these groups. The Parsonage Barn and East Fields Character Area Guidance, within the SPD, says that there are a number of buildings and groups of buildings where clarity of form is intrinsic to their heritage value. It also advises that, in these instances, interfering with roofscapes especially will deplete their contribution to the character of the town. This guidance adds weight to my conclusion that the proposals would be harmful to the character of the group of buildings.
6. My attention has been drawn to alterations that have taken place to a bungalow at 85 Parsonage Barn Lane, to provide first floor accommodation, with a gable end fronting the road. I saw that the context for that development is quite different, as the previous bungalow was not part of a characterful group of similar properties, and the site is adjacent to a two-storey house. It does not, therefore, set a precedent for the appeal proposal which must, in any case, be considered on its own merits.
7. I am mindful of the appellant's view that the proposals would improve the appearance of an undistinguished bungalow. However, taken as a group, this row of bungalows provides a distinctive character to the street scene of this part of the road. The proposals would be out of keeping with the rest of the bungalows and would diminish the character of the group as a whole.
8. I therefore conclude that the development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy CS2 of the New Forest District (outside the National Park) Core Strategy (2009) (the Core Strategy). This policy seeks to ensure that development is well designed to respect the character, identity, and context of the area. The proposals would also conflict with the aims of Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) to achieve well-designed places.

Living conditions

9. 19 Parsonage Barn Lane lies to the north of the appeal site, and comprises a bungalow set at the same ground level as No 21, and with a similar front building line. It is separated from the appeal site boundary by its driveway, which gives access to a detached garage in the rear garden. There are a number of door and window openings in the side wall of the bungalow facing the appeal site, including a kitchen window towards the rear. There is also a conservatory extension on the rear elevation, which has windows looking towards the appeal site. The space in front of the conservatory and garage provides a sheltered outdoor amenity area for the occupants of the bungalow, but there is also a level rear garden.

10. 21 Parsonage Barn Lane lies close to its northern boundary, and the proposed rear extension would result in the building projecting further back on its plot, beyond the main rear elevation of No 19. The proposals would also involve a very significant increase in the bulk of the roof over the appeal bungalow. At the time of my visit, around mid-day in winter, it was evident that the proposals would result in the loss of direct sunlight to the kitchen window and conservatory. However, this would only be the case when the sun is low in the sky. In other seasons, and at other times of day, sunlight would still reach these windows.
11. The driveway results in a significant gap between the bungalows. The proposals do not involve an increase in the eaves height, and the roof, although steeper and higher, would slope away from No 19. As a result, light would still reach the doors and windows in its south elevation at a relatively shallow angle. Those towards the front are already shaded by the existing bungalow, so the proposals would not result in a significant loss of light. The impact on the amount of light reaching the kitchen window, towards the rear of the property, would be more significant, as this window is currently less affected by the existing roof. However, this is not the only source of light to this room, as there is also an east-facing window in the rear elevation. Consequently, the proposals would not result in a harmful loss of light to occupants of the kitchen.
12. The conservatory is further from the boundary than the kitchen window, so the shading effect of the proposals would be less significant. It also has a transparent roof, and windows in its east-facing rear elevation. Consequently, acceptable levels of daylight would be retained for occupants of the conservatory.
13. The rearward projection of the bungalow, combined with the more extensive, and higher roof would, to some extent, reduce the openness of the outlook from the kitchen window, the conservatory, and the courtyard area in front of the garage. However, the eaves height of the building would not be elevated above its current level, and the roof would slope away, so the height of the building close to the boundary would not be oppressive. Occupants of the kitchen and conservatory would retain an open outlook to the east, from windows looking over the rear garden. The courtyard area would be rather more enclosed as a result of the proposals, but occupants would also have access to the rear garden, which would be largely unaffected by the development. The outlook from the garden, as a whole, would not therefore be significantly harmed.
14. I therefore conclude that the development would not have a harmful effect on the living conditions of the occupants of 19 Parsonage Barn Lane. In this regard, the proposals would comply with Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy, insofar as it seeks to ensure that development does not cause unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion, shading or other adverse impact on local amenities. The development would also accord with the aims of Section 12 of the Framework, to ensure a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Conclusion

15. Although I have found the proposals acceptable in terms of the impact on the living conditions of the occupants of the adjacent property, this does not outweigh the harm that I have found to the character and appearance of the

area. For the reasons given above, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Nick Davies

INSPECTOR