
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 September 2020

by S Leonard BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/B1740/D/20/3256609

Nutmeg Cottage, Mopley, Blackfield, Southampton SO45 1YJ

- 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 and Mrs Harnett against the decision of New Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/10474, dated 1 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 26 June 2020.
 - The development proposed is detached oak framed garage/carport.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached bungalow which is finished in brick under a steeply hipped tiled roof. There is a large, paved, parking area to the front of the dwelling, which is partially enclosed by high mature hedging along the site frontage and panel fencing and trees along the side boundary with the neighbouring property Wyvern. Vehicular access is via a shared access drive leading from Mopley, which also serves two dwellings to the rear.
4. The site lies within an established residential area, comprising a mix of single and two storey dwellings of a variety of designs. This part of Mopley comprises a narrow road with deep grass verges to both sides, and no pavements for a large part. Dwellings are set back from the road, behind deep front gardens or parking areas. Site frontages are defined by low walls or fences and/or soft landscaping. Consequently, the street scene within the vicinity of the appeal site has a semi-rural quality.
5. The proposed garage/car port would take up a considerable amount of the area to the front of the appeal property. It would be sited close to both the bungalow and the front boundary of the site. It would, therefore, result in a tight form of built development which would be out of keeping with the spacious, set back nature of built development within the immediate locality.
6. The proposed steeply hipped roof would add considerable massing and height to the development, so that it would be of a scale that would compete visually

- with the modest sized bungalow, and would not appear completely subordinate to it. This discordant relationship with the host property would be exacerbated by the position of the proposed structure directly in front of one of the two large feature front elevation windows, and the width of the proposed building, which would extend to about half of that of the bungalow.
7. The existing mature front and side boundary planting would screen the majority of the proposal in views from the west and directly in front of the site. However, the development would be clearly visible from the public realm when viewed from the east from Mopley Road and the adjacent access road. Furthermore, whilst the structure could be largely screened at present, I cannot be certain that the mature boundary soft landscaping would remain, and this is not a reason to allow development that is unacceptable.
 8. As such, the proposal would result in an unduly bulky and visually prominent addition, which would comprise an incongruous feature within the street scene. It would relate poorly to the host property, and would comprise a more cramped form of built development than is characteristic of the site frontages in this part of Mopley. Accordingly, it would significantly erode the space in front of the existing dwelling, thereby materially harming the open and spacious character of this part of the road. It would not, therefore, be sympathetic to the surrounding built environment.
 9. I acknowledge the intention of the appellants for a timber-framed, part open-sided, and timber and tile finished structure to assimilate into the semi-rural locality. However, this does not outweigh my aforementioned concerns in respect of the building size, height, footprint and position.
 10. The appellants have referred me to 2 existing garages situated to the front of dwellings within this part of Mopley. On the basis of the evidence before me, and my site inspection, I find that these structures are not directly comparable with the appeal proposal. Differences include a shallower roof form, a greater set back from the site frontage, a different juxtaposition in relation to the host and neighbouring properties, and taking up a smaller proportion of the front garden area. In any case, I must determine this appeal on the basis of the particular circumstances of the appeal site, and on the merits of the scheme before me.
 11. For the above reasons, I therefore conclude that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would be contrary to Policy CS2 of the *New Forest District outside the National Park Core Strategy 2009* (the Core Strategy), which, amongst other things, requires new development to be well designed, contribute positively to local distinctiveness and sense of place, and be appropriate and sympathetic to its setting in terms of scale, height, layout, appearance and relationship to adjoining buildings. For similar reasons, the proposal would also be contrary to Policies of the *National Planning Policy Framework 2019* (the Framework) which seek to secure high quality design as set out in Chapter 12.

Other Matters

12. Whilst I have given careful consideration to the requirements of the appellants for privacy and shelter when accessing a vehicle, I am not persuaded by the evidence before me that the proposed design is necessary to achieve these conditions. Also, I am mindful of the advice contained in Planning Practice

Guidance¹ that, in general, planning is concerned with land use in the public interest. It is also probable that the proposed development would remain long after the current personal circumstances cease to be material. For these reasons, I therefore find that this factor is not sufficient to outweigh the harm that would be caused contrary to the Core Strategy and the Framework.

13. The appellants have drawn my attention to the lack of objections raised by neighbours in response to the planning application. However, this does not alter my conclusions on the main issue.

Conclusion

14. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Leonard

INSPECTOR

² Paragraph 008 Reference ID 21b-008-20140306 – ‘What is a material planning consideration?’