
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 September 2020

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N1730/D/20/3251504

100 Aldershot Road, Fleet, GU51 3GY

- 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 Vale against the decision of Hart District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00017/HOU, dated 6 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 31 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a detached garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a detached garage at 100 Aldershot Road, Fleet, GU51 3GY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/00017/HOU, dated 6 January 2020, 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 plan: Drg No 19/1196P.

Procedural Matters

2. Since the date of the decision the Council has adopted the *Hart Local Plan (Strategy and Sites) 2032* (HLPSS). In May 2020 the Council published the *Hart District Local Plan (Replacement) 1996-2006 Saved Policies* (LP Saved Policies). The decision notice includes reference to *Hart District Local Plan (Replacement) 1996-2006* policies GEN4 and CON13. Neither of these policies are included within the LP Saved Policies and I take it therefore that they no longer form part of the development plan for Hart.
3. The decision notice also refers to Policy NBE10 - *Design* (incorrectly given as NEB10) of the emerging HLPSS. Since the formal adoption of the HLPSS this policy has become part of the development plan for Hart although it has been renumbered as Policy NBE9.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, including The Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a detached house positioned along a main road within a linear arrangement of dwellings and backing onto the Basingstoke Canal. The site lies within The Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area (CA). The proposal is to erect a double, detached garage to the front of the dwelling, set back from the boundary to Aldershot Road.
6. Aldershot Road is an urban environment characterised by a fairly busy traffic route and visually dominated by mature trees and vegetation, with residential front boundaries tight to the back edge of the pavement to the north side of the road, including at No 100. Buildings are set back along a varied forward building line and are generally not particularly prominent within the street scene.
7. The proposal is for a single-storey garage structure that would be set around 4.5m back from the front boundary. The plans show that existing hedging to the front would be retained and I note that the original application had confirmation from the appellant that the garage would have no foundations as it would be a prefabricated wooden structure set on concrete slabs. The Council's Tree Officer had no objections, and I am satisfied that the construction of the garage would not result in the loss of any existing vegetation.
8. The Council is concerned that the garage would be an unacceptably large structure forward of the dwelling's building line. However, it would be appropriately residential in scale, subservient in size compared to the house, and obviously ancillary in terms of its use. Whilst it would be visible from Aldershot Road to some degree, its recessed position would ensure that it would not appear overly prominent or intrusive within the street scene.
9. LP Saved Policy CON 10 deals specifically with the Basingstoke Canal, as does Policy 14 of the Fleet Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2032 adopted November 2019. Both policies seek to protect the landscape, architectural and ecological character, setting and enjoyment of the Basingstoke Canal as a heritage asset. The Council's decision found no conflict with either of these policies and based upon my own observations and the evidence before me, I am satisfied that the character and appearance of the canal environs would be unaffected by the proposed development fronting Aldershot Road.

Other Matters

10. I have noted the concern expressed by Fleet Town Council with regard to the manoeuvring of vehicles on the site, but there is no evidence before me to show that vehicular access to or from the appeal property would affect pedestrian or highway safety, or the free flow of traffic along Aldershot Road.

Conditions

11. A condition specifying the relevant plans is necessary as this provides certainty. The Council has suggested a condition requiring the materials to be used on the

external surfaces of the development to match those in the existing building. However, the proposal is for a stand-alone, timber clad structure which would be appropriate in its setting. No such materials condition is therefore necessary. The Council has also proposed a vaguely worded condition relating to tree protection but given the clearly stated form of construction this is not necessary.

Conclusions

12. For the reasons given, I am satisfied that the proposal would not harm the character or appearance of the area and that the character and appearance of the CA would be preserved. There would be no conflict with HLPSS Policy NBE9 – *Design* which requires development to be in keeping with local character. Accordingly, in the absence of any other identified conflict with the development plan, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR