
Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 3 August 2021

by S Harley BSc(Hons) M.Phil MRTPI ARICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5 August 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/B9506/D/21/3268862

Tanglewood, St Aubyns Lane, Hangersley, Ringwood, BH24 3JU

- 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 Packham against the decision of New Forest National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref 20/00889, dated 27 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 27 January 2021.
 - The development proposed is car port attached to existing outbuilding.
-

Preliminary Matter

1. The Block Plan Ref SA 01 REV P1 appears to have an inaccurate scale bar. Accordingly I have considered the appeal on the basis of the Plans Ref SA 20 REV P1 and SA 10 REV P1 together with the appellant's statement, at Paragraph 3.13 of the Grounds of Appeal, that the size proposed for the car port is 7m by 5.5m.

Decision

2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for car port attached to existing outbuilding at Tanglewood, St Aubyns Lane, Hangersley, Ringwood, BH24 3JU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/00889, dated 27 November 2020, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The car port hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans SA 20 REV P1 and SA 10 REV P1 and shall be no more than 7m by 5.5m.
 - 3) No development shall take place above slab level until samples or exact details of the facing and roofing materials have been submitted to and approved in writing by the New Forest National Park Authority.
 - 4) The open sides of the carport, as shown on the plans hereby permitted, shall not be enclosed.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed car port on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is within the Western Escarpment Conservation Area (the CA) and the New Forest National Park. The significance of the CA as a whole lies in the distinctive historic settlement pattern, which has evolved over time in relation to the landscape of the New Forest. Historically the settlement pattern of the area was one of dispersed farmsteads at the base of and on the slopes of the escarpment with a number of small medieval holdings belonging to larger manors. Small settlements gradually developed and dwellings became scattered along rural lanes.
5. The Highwood and Hangersley Character Area part of the CA, including St Aubyns Lane, is at the southern end of the escarpment. It is an area of dispersed settlement running from the A31 in the south, to Highwood in the north and contains a few relatively small settlements. Scattered houses are interspersed with woodland, copses, and fields. The wider area is served by a network of intersecting lanes, many with hedge and tree boundaries. St Aubyns Lane is one such narrow, rural, cul-de-sac lane with houses interspersed between woodlands and fields.
6. The appeal site is a substantial detached two storey house. Its garden slopes gently down from the lane and plateaus in the vicinity of the existing buildings; the land then drops more steeply to the rear. The house and an existing outbuilding, which has a first floor within the roof space, are set back from St Aubyns Lane but can be seen from it across the low open barred gate and in filtered views through the adjoining woodland.
7. The two bay car port would adjoin the existing outbuilding at some distance from the host dwelling. It would project towards St Aubyns Lane from the outbuilding with the rear parallel to the side boundary. The ridge and eaves line of the gable roof would be lower than the existing and would therefore appear subordinate. The design, with the apex of the proposed gable wall being timber clad, would be in character with the existing outbuilding and would be smaller than the host dwelling.
8. The boundary treatments, including tall shrubs and hedges along the St Aubyns Lane boundary, would be retained and there would be no material impact on any notable trees. As indicated on the proposed floor plan the car port would be some 7m by 5.5m and the appellant confirms in the appeal statement that the car port would cover some 38.5 sqm rather than the 62 sqm cited by the Authority. Provided the front and side of the car port remain open, this light weight structure would not be harmful to the landscape and scenic beauty of the National Park and would have neutral effect on the character and appearance of the CA as a whole despite the increased building footprint. Nor do I find the car port would affect the cultural heritage of the National Park as it would serve an existing dwelling and not result in a change of use.
9. I conclude that the proposal would have an acceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area. I find no material conflict with Policies DP37, SP17 and SP16 of the New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016-2036 or the Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2011 which require high quality design reflecting the character and appearance of the National Park and CA, and which requires outbuildings to be proportionate and not compete with the host dwelling in design and size.

Other Matter

10. The Authority has expressed some preference for an alternative siting/design away from the existing outbuilding Plan Ref 1b. However, this would be likely to be more intrusive as it would be closer to St Auybns Lane and may require the removal of established vegetation. Moreover, as the overall footprint would appear to be about the same this does not lead me to any different conclusion.

Conditions

11. As well as the standard condition specifying the time limits for the commencement of development, compliance with the approved plans is necessary to provide certainty. In this instance given the anomaly of the scale bar on the Block Plan I consider it appropriate to specify the size of the car port in a condition in the interests of precision. Materials for external surfaces should be approved in the interests of the character and appearance of the area.
12. The Authority has proposed a condition preventing use of the car port for habitable accommodation such as kitchens, living rooms and bedrooms. The reason given is to protect the character and appearance of the countryside. However, this would be more appropriately achieved by a condition preventing the enclosure of the open sides of the car port as proposed by the appellant. Accordingly I have imposed such a condition instead.

Conclusion

13. I find no material conflict with development plan policies. The appeal should be allowed.

S Harley

INSPECTOR