



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 13 September 2021

by James Blackwell LLB (Hons)

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 October 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/A1720/D/21/3276769

106 Funtley Road, Fareham PO17 5EF

- 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 Paul MacDonald against the decision of Fareham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P/21/0437/FP, dated 11 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 4 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is a timber garage for use as ancillary storage for the existing dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposed timber garage has already been constructed. References to the development in this decision therefore relate to development which has already been carried out.
3. Since determination of the planning application, the 2019 iteration of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) has been superseded by the July 2021 version. Both parties have had the opportunity to comment on the changes. I have therefore determined this appeal with regard to the current version.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a detached dwelling on the northern side of Funtley Road, which is predominantly residential in nature. The dwelling is separated from the road by an area of hardstanding which acts as a driveway to the property. The driveway is enclosed by a boundary wall and gate to the front, a tall hedgerow to its western side, and a further wall along its boundary with the neighbouring property to the east. Most of the dwellings along the same side of Funtley Road are similarly set back (albeit to varying degrees), which provides a sense of openness that contributes positively to the character of the area.
6. The garage/storage facility has a width of approximately 4.8m and a depth of approximately 3m, and occupies a large part of the footprint of the front driveway. It is sited on the western side of the property, and sits just behind

the front boundary wall and extends out very close to the front elevation of the dwelling. Due to the modest size of the wider driveway and the insufficient space left between the development and the front boundary wall and the front elevation to the house, the garage/storage building appears excessively large, dominant and cramped, which is harmful to the open character of the street scene.

7. These issues are also exacerbated by the height of the garage, as the roof ridge extends up towards the second-floor windows of the main dwelling. Whilst the tall hedgerow along the western boundary of the appeal property does obscure views of the development when approaching from the west, the situation is different when approaching from the east or from Lakeside immediately opposite. The garage/storage facility is significantly taller than the front boundary wall, which means it is visually prominent on the approach from both of these directions. This again detracts from the sense of openness that is attributed to the spacious front gardens of properties along this side of the road.
8. The Fareham Borough Design Guidance SPD¹ (SPD) is clear that "*garages or other buildings in front gardens will normally only be allowed in streets where others are already found*". During my site visit, I saw no examples of similar development on comparable plots. As per the SPD, this factor alone is indicative that the development is unlikely to be acceptable.
9. Moreover, the guidance is accompanied by an explanatory diagram to help illustrate circumstances when new buildings within front gardens will and will not be acceptable. In this instance, the size, context and siting of the development is markedly similar to the diagram used in the SPD to demonstrate examples of inappropriate development. This is predominantly because the site isn't large enough to accommodate a storage facility of the size proposed without appearing unduly cramped. Again, the SPD is therefore clear that development should be refused in such circumstances.
10. For the reasons set out above, the development harms the character and appearance of the area. It conflicts with Policy CS17 of the Council's Core Strategy (adopted 2011), which requires development to respond positively to the key characteristics of an area, including landscape, scale, form and spaciousness. As outlined above, the development also conflicts with the guidance in the SPD.

Other Matters

11. Whilst I agree that the external materials used in the construction of the development are generally in-keeping with the mixed character of development in the wider area, this is a neutral factor, and does not outweigh the harm that the development causes to the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, and having considered the development plan as a whole, the approach in the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), and all other relevant material considerations, the appeal should be dismissed.

¹ Fareham Borough Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (adopted December 2015)

James Blackwell

INSPECTOR