



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 October 2021

by G Roberts BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/P2114/D/21/3277966

15 Undercliff Gardens, Ventnor, PO38 1UB

- 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 P Thomas against the decision of Isle of Wight Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00662/HOU, dated 24 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 24 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is a single storey extension with parking over, formation of vehicular access.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of development on the decision notice is slightly different to that on the application form. I have adopted the former as it more accurately describes the appeal proposal.
3. On 20 July 2021 the Government published a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) (Framework). However, the policies that are relevant to this appeal have not changed and there was no need, therefore, to invite the parties to make further submissions in response to the revised Framework.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and streetscene.

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises a two-storey detached property set within a large plot and landscaped grounds. Due to the local topography, the host property sits at a much lower level to the road (Undercliff Gardens) and incorporates an existing garage accessed via a drive that drops down from the road. The top part of this drive is shared with the new detached dwelling that has recently been built to the west of the appeal site.
6. Most of the properties within the surrounding area are detached, dating from the 1970's to more recent development. This part of Undercliff Gardens, which forms a cul-de-sac, includes a detached two storey dwelling at No.12, to the west of the appeal site and a row of single storey bungalows, to the north of the appeal site. The parking for No.12 is via a drive that drops down to a

garage, whereas the parking for the bungalows opposite is in a more traditional layout, located on individual drives that form part of open front gardens laid to lawn and landscaping.

7. The appeal proposal is for a single storey ground floor extension with a parking deck over. The council have not raised any objection to the single storey extension, and I concur with those findings. It is the design, scale and location of the proposed parking deck that the Council object to. The submitted plans show that this parking deck would be sited over the proposed ground floor extension, projecting above the level of the footway to Undercliff Gardens. The proposed balustrading, to the parking deck, would project even higher above the footway. With the removal of the existing hedging, both the balustrading and cars parked on the new deck, would be visible from Undercliff Gardens. Access to the proposed parking deck would be via a new crossover.
8. During my site visit, I viewed the proposal from a number of vantage points, including the public footpath that steps down the western boundary of the new dwelling (to the west of the appeal site). However, a new timber fence along the western boundary of this new dwelling largely precludes views of the proposed parking deck. Even so, as I indicated above, the parking deck would be visible from the public footway that runs along the northern boundary of the appeal site, as well as from the road itself and the bungalows opposite.
9. Within this context, the design, scale and siting of the proposed parking deck would, in my judgement, appear alien to and would be overly dominant within the streetscene. It would be out of character with the design and scale of the host property and would represent an awkward addition to this part of the streetscene, which is largely characterised by existing hedging and mature trees, with any built form sitting at a much lower and less visible level.
10. Overall, the proposed decking would not sit comfortably on this part of the appeal site. It would be unsympathetic to and would fail to harmonise with the original form of the host property or with the approved proposals to extend and refurbish this property. It would also introduce an uncharacteristic addition to this part of the streetscene resulting in significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and this part of Undercliff Gardens.
11. Whilst reference has been made to examples of split-level parking elsewhere and to the parking at road level for the new dwelling to the west, these do not affect the findings I have reached above. I have not been provided with any planning background to some of these examples and I am unable, therefore, to reach a finding on whether they are comparable or not. In relation to the parking for the new dwelling, my understanding from the planning history for that development is that the area in question was originally hardstanding that could have been utilised for parking.
12. The Appellant contends that the topography of the appeal site creates the need to bring forward challenging design solutions when promoting new development and that the new dwelling and approval of extensions to the host property, is evidence of the change that has and is occurring in the area. That may be so, but those considerations do not provide justification for the proposed car deck. Furthermore, the Appellant's statement must be seen in the context that the appeal site already benefits from a drive that leads to an existing garage, an arrangement that was shown, I understand, as being

retained as part of the approved and now built out layout of the adjacent new dwelling.

13. For the reasons given above, I find that the proposed development would be contrary to policy DM2 of the Island Plan Core Strategy (March 2012). This policy seeks, amongst other requirements, to ensure that new development is of a high quality design, whilst allowing change to occur; that it integrates with its surroundings; has regard to views and landscaping; and complements the character of the area. This policy approach is consistent with that of the Framework. The appeal proposal fails to meet these policy objectives resulting in significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and streetscene.

Conclusions

14. For the reasons given above and having taken all other matters into account, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Roberts

INSPECTOR