



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 April 2022

by G Ellis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19TH May 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C1760/W/21/3286596

Highfield, Longparish, Andover SP11 6QQ

- 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 Sonn against the decision of Test Valley Borough Council
 - The application Ref 21/02251/FULLN, dated 29 July 2021, was refused by notice dated 29 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of dwelling and garage and the erection of replacement dwelling and garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. Further to the submission of the appeal, planning permission has been granted for a replacement dwelling and garage – Council reference 21/03167/FULLN. Under this approved scheme the design of the dwelling is the same as the appeal proposal, however the garage is to be attached to the front of the dwelling, adjacent to the boundary with Broadacre. The approved dwelling is under construction and therefore I have restricted my considerations in this appeal to the proposed detached garage.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. Highfield is part of a short row of dwellings to the north of Mill House Lane at a loop in the road. The sporadic development is some distance from the main part of Longparish village to the west. To the east the road turns a corner and is bound by agricultural fields.
5. While the site is within the defined settlement boundary it is at the very edge of the village and the deep front gardens provide a sense of spaciousness. Overall, the area has a verdant appearance with the River Test and a wooded area running along the other side of Mill House Lane.

6. The dwelling (under-construction) is elevated from the road and effectively aligns with the neighbouring properties, Juglans¹ and Woodstock. Neither of these dwellings, or the others within the row, have detached garages in front of the dwelling. Currently, Highfield has a relatively open frontage and whilst boundary treatments and vegetation to other properties create a level of screening to the road this is not as extensive along the side boundaries, particularly to the west, permitting views of the appeal site along Mill House Lane.
7. The proposed timber structure would have a hipped roof and comprise a double garage with a lower bike shed element to the rear. Located adjacent to the boundary with Juglans it would be approximately halfway between the dwelling and the front boundary, and on higher ground than the road. The siting would be contrary to the advice in the Longparish Village Design Statement which indicates that '*garages should be discrete, to the side or rear of buildings, and large areas of hardstanding should be avoided*'.
8. The appellant has referred me to other properties within Longparish which have garages in a forward position. Each proposal is to be considered on its own merits, nonetheless, I agree with the Council that those at Lower Mill Villas and Meadowsweet are located in a more built-up area of the village where there is development to both sides of the road. Also, the well-established outbuilding at Meadow Farm Cottage, is much smaller and is not positioned in front of the dwelling. As such, I do not find that these examples demonstrate that garages to the front are part of the prevailing pattern of development within the locality of the site or that they are a predominant feature of the village.
9. In my opinion, the siting and scale of the garage would be a notable feature, out of keeping with the character of the area. New planting would take time to establish and soft landscaping, within the site and the neighbouring properties, is not necessarily a permanent feature. I thereby find that the proposed development would result in harm to the established character and appearance of the area and would conflict with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) policies COM2, E1 and E2 which seek to ensure development integrates with and is respectful to the local environment. It would also depart from the guidance in the Longparish Village Design Statement which aims to encourage development that preserves and enhances the special character of the village.

Other Matters

10. The appellant has submitted an alternative scheme (drawings 2596.07A and 2596.08A) as part of the appeal which omits the bike store. Whilst this reduces the scale of the building it would still be in a forward position and would not overcome the harm I have identified.
11. Reference has also been made to an extant consent² for a carport to the neighbouring property, Walnut Tree House (also referred to as Juglans). I acknowledge that the scale and positioning of this would be similar to the proposal, specifically the alternative scheme. Be that as it may, there is nothing to suggest that the carport is likely to be built, nor is the complete planning history for that property before me. In my view, given that it has not been erected in the 20 years since the planning permission was granted it is no

¹ It is labelled as Juglans on the plans; however the appellant indicates that it is known as Walnut Tree House.

² Council reference TVN.08161 decision dated June 2001.

more than a theoretical possibility, and the permission was granted in a different policy context and prior to the introduction of the Village Design Statement. I have therefore given this matter limited weight.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out, and having regard to all other matters raised, I dismiss the appeal.

Gill Ellis

INSPECTOR