



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 December 2022

by G Roberts BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24th January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/D1265/D/22/3307560

6 Egdon Court, Dorchester Road, Upton, Dorset, BH16 5NR

- 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 N Heritage against the decision of Dorset Council.
 - The application Ref P/HOU/2022/03355, dated 27 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 9 August 2022.
 - The development proposed is erect side/rear two storey extension to existing dwelling house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. Both parties have referred to the emerging Purbeck Local Plan (2018-2034) where I understand the examination has been ongoing for some time and there have been consultations on proposed and further proposed main modifications. The Council's Delegated Report states that in view of the current stage reached only limited weight should be accorded the relevant policies from this plan. For these reasons, I have only accorded any relevant emerging policies limited weight in the determination of this appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located in Egdon Court, which comprises a small cul-de-sac of six modern properties, a mix of semi and detached property's that are two storeys' apart from a bungalow at the rear of the cul-de-sac. All the properties are accessed off Dorchester Road, with the host comprising a detached two storey property on the eastern side of Egdon Court, sited side on to Dorchester Road. The southern boundary of the appeal abuts the grass verge and pavement to Dorchester Road, with the main house set back from this boundary and the gap in between forming part of the garden that wraps around to the rear. The host's boundary to Dorchester Road is enclosed by a close boarded fence with latticed trellis above and immediately to its rear is a high evergreen/conifer hedge.
5. To the east of the appeal site is The Triangle a two storey flat roofed development with commercial units on the ground floor and what appear to be

flats on the first floor. To the west of the appeal site and on the northern and southern sides of Dorchester Road is a mixture of detached and semi-detached properties, including bungalows and two storey houses exhibiting a variety of styles, scale, layout, building form and materials. There is no uniform design, although, as with the appeal site, the properties are set back from Dorchester Road with their frontages used for parking, landscaping and lawns. There are also a number of prominent mature trees sited close to the road, which, combined with the existing grass verges and boundary hedging, are a distinctive and positive characteristic of this part of Dorchester road.

6. The appeal proposal would involve the construction of a two storey side and rear extension. The proposal would extend from the existing side elevation of the host to within just over 1 metre of the southern boundary, thus infilling most of the existing open gap. The close proximity of the new extension to the southern boundary would require a length of the existing hedge to be removed, the extent of which appears to correspond with the depth of the new side/rear extension.
7. Within the above context, the proposal would, in my view, result in an extension that would not be sympathetic to or in proportion to the host property. Given its design, including on the frontage the proposed elevated eaves height and tile hanging at first floor, and the height of the ridge to the large side and rear extension, the proposal would result in an awkward juxtaposition with the host property. The latter would be exacerbated by the poor alignment and sizing of the new windows on the front elevation. Overall, the proposal would not harmonise well with the host and would overpower it.
8. The scale, bulk and footprint of the proposal results in an extension that is not, in my view, properly subservient to the host. Through what appears to be nearly a doubling of the existing footprint and building mass, the result is an extension that would visually dominate the streetscene and views from Dorchester Road. Combined with the reduction in the existing gap and thus the current openness between the host and Dorchester Road, the proposed extension would lead to significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.
9. Whilst I note that both parties have referred to existing building lines, in my view, the principal issue here is that the host property is already sited closer to Dorchester Road than its residential neighbours. The appeal proposal would result in built development extending even closer to Dorchester Road, with a full two storeys set back marginally from the sites southern boundary. Consequently, the host property, as extended, would be highly prominent visually. The openness that currently exists on this boundary would be reduced considerably and a sizeable length of the existing hedging would be removed, both of which are features that contribute positively to the character of this part of Dorchester Road.
10. As I observed on site, the existing side elevation to the host property is well screened by the timber fence/trellis and high hedge behind it, with the latter, where it extends above the fence/trellis softening views of the host's flank wall from Dorchester Road. With the proposal, this view would be replaced by a much larger flank wall and large expanse of roof, marginally set back from the southern boundary and screened only, I have assumed, by the retained boundary fence/trellis. As a consequence, the proposed side elevation would

create a substantial hard edge to the appeal site that would be overly dominant within the streetscene.

11. These findings are supported by policy D of the Purbeck Local Plan Part 1 (November 2012) (PLP) which, amongst other requirements, seeks to ensure that new development positively integrates with its surroundings; reflects good practice guidance; and demonstrates a positive approach to the delivery of sustainable development through its site layout and building design. Also, by the Purbeck District Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (January 2014) (SPD), which states, amongst other things, that extensions should seek to harmonise with the existing property; that side extensions need to carefully consider the impact on the character of any gap between the existing property and its boundary where that gap plays an important role in shaping the character of the street; that side extensions on corner sites are likely to dominate the immediate townscape where built close to the boundary; and, that any new windows should align horizontally and vertically (paragraphs 101 – 106 (inclusive) of the SPD).
12. I accept that there are some elements of the proposed design that comply with the SPD's guidance, such as the set back of the proposed side extension on the front elevation to the host. However, as I have found above, there are far more elements of the design, scale, siting and visual impact of the proposal that conflict with the SPD's guidance.
13. Whilst I also acknowledge that the proposal would promote the effective use of land and that the appeal site is within a sustainable location, these considerations and the presumption in favour of sustainable development are not sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified and the direct conflict with development plan policy and SPD guidance.
14. Accordingly, I find that the appeal proposal would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area contrary to policy D of the PLP, the SPD guidance and paragraphs 130 and 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) (Framework).

Conclusions

15. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires all proposals for development to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. As I have found above, the appeal proposal would be in conflict with development plan policy and SPD guidance, as well as relevant policies in the Framework and there are no material considerations, including any personal considerations, that justify making a decision other than in accordance with the development plan.
16. For the reasons given above and having taken all other matters into account, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Roberts

INSPECTOR