



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 February 2023

by Nick Davies BSc(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16th February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/W/22/3302727

200C Ringwood Road, Parkstone, Poole BH14 0RR

- 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 D Gloyn against the decision of Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council.
 - The application Ref APP/21/01326/F, dated 2 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 14 January 2022.
 - The development proposed is a two storey semi-detached dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - a) The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area; and,
 - b) The impact of the development on the integrity of the Dorset Heathland Special Protection Area (SPA) and the Dorset Heaths Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site comprises an area of land between two two-storey residential properties, which are positioned at an angle to each other. Both buildings front Ringwood Road, but they follow its sharp curve into Dale Road, resulting in a roughly triangular space between the two end elevations. As Ringwood Road carries a high volume of traffic, and Dale Road leads to an extensive area of housing, the site occupies a prominent location adjacent to a busy junction. The dwellings in Ringwood Road and Dale Road comprise a mixture of houses and bungalows. While these are of various designs, there is a consistency in their traditional design and their layout, with the dwellings following the line of the road, and being set back behind enclosed front gardens.
4. The proposal is for a two-storey extension, which would project at an angle from the main building towards Ringwood Road, and would provide a two-bedroomed house. To provide sufficient car-parking and manoeuvring, most of the area around the extension would be hard-surfaced, and a cycle storage building would be prominently located close to the front boundary. The only available space for outdoor amenity and soft landscaping would be a very restricted area hemmed in by car-parking spaces on both sides, which would

be open to view over the low boundary wall, and would have little shelter from the traffic noise on Ringwood Road. The development would, therefore, have the appearance of being shoehorned into a rather awkwardly shaped plot, which is much smaller than is characteristic of the prevailing pattern of development in the area. This would conflict with Policy PP28 of the Poole Local Plan (2018) (the Local Plan), which says plot sub-divisions will only be permitted where there is sufficient land to enable a type, scale and layout of development, including parking and usable amenity space, to be accommodated in a manner which would preserve or enhance the area's residential character.

5. The attempt to achieve the desired level of accommodation on a plot of such restricted size and shape, has resulted in a proposed extension that would not relate well to the existing building. It would be at an angle to the original building, and its roof would be at a lower level. As a result, the roof of the extension would have an asymmetric and uncomfortable junction with the hipped roof of the host building. Furthermore, the elongated roof slope on the west elevation would result in a very awkward arrangement where it meets the eaves and hip of the existing building, and a somewhat disjointed south elevation. Although the reduced ridge height would go some way towards ensuring that the extension would be subservient in scale to the host building, it would, nevertheless, be a prominent addition to it, and its design would not respect its character and appearance.
6. There is a consistent building line formed by the front facades of the buildings along Ringwood Road. The submitted drawings show that the extension would not maintain this alignment, but would project well beyond it, resulting in it being a prominent and discordant feature in views from the southwest. The houses in Dale Road are not so rigidly aligned, but the extension would be angled towards the road, rather than following its curvature around the junction with Ringwood Road. It would not, therefore, be successful in visually carrying the building around the corner. Instead, it would jut out at an awkward angle that would be discordant with the layout of surrounding buildings. It would not, therefore, reflect or enhance the local pattern of development, as required by Policy PP27 of the Local Plan.
7. Overall, the size and shape of the site means that the development would have an uncharacteristically cramped appearance, and would have a contrived design that would not relate well to the host building, or the surrounding layout of dwellings. As it would be prominently located on a corner adjacent to a busy junction, I conclude that the development would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would, therefore, be contrary to Policies PP27 and PP28 of the Local Plan, which seek a good standard of design in all new developments, and to ensure that plot sub-divisions preserve or enhance the area's residential character. The Council's reason for refusal also refers to conflict with Policy PP37 of the Local Plan, but no evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that its requirements for sustainable design could not be achieved through the imposition of appropriate planning conditions.

Dorset Heathland SPA and the Dorset Heaths SAC

8. The appeal site lies within 5km of the SPA and SAC. Although not referred to in the Council's reason for refusal, the Officer's Report indicates that the site is also within easy reach of the Poole Harbour SPA. Evidence shows that these

- European sites are under significant pressure from an increase in the level of recreation, and disturbance of bird species, as a result of urban development.
9. The proposal would result in an additional dwelling within the area of influence of the European sites. Whilst the impact of a single dwelling would be small, in cumulation with the 14,200 new homes identified in the Local Plan up to 2033, it has the potential to impact on the integrity of the protected sites, through increased recreational disturbance. In these circumstances, the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 require that an Appropriate Assessment (AA) is carried out, and that permission may only be granted after having ascertained that development will not affect the integrity of the European sites. There is no dispute between the parties regarding the need for mitigating measures. I have therefore carried out my AA on a proportionate basis with regard to the evidence before me.
 10. The Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework Strategy Supplementary Planning Document sets out that mitigation for the impacts of development will be delivered through a combination of Heathland Infrastructure Projects (HIPs), and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM). The HIPs will be funded by the Council using Community Infrastructure Levy receipts, whereas SAMM funding will be through individual contributions from all developments that involve an increase in dwellings. In the case of Poole Harbour SPA, the mitigation strategy is set out in the Poole Harbour Recreation SPD, which requires recreational impacts to be mitigated via individual contributions from developments.
 11. I am mindful that the appellant has indicated a willingness to make the necessary payments to the Council. However, there is no legal agreement in place that would secure these payments if I were to allow the appeal. Consequently, there is no mechanism in place to ensure that the increased recreational pressure resulting from the development would be mitigated. Following AA and adopting a precautionary approach, I am therefore unable to conclude that the development would not affect the integrity of the European sites. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy PP32 of the Local Plan, which seeks to ensure that development does not lead to adverse effects upon the integrity, either alone or in-combination, of European and internationally important sites.

Planning Balance

12. I am mindful that Section 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) encourages the effective use of land to deliver homes. However, Paragraph 124d) requires that in meeting this aim, the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character should be taken into account. As I have found that the proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area, I only give limited weight to the benefit of efficient land use.
13. Furthermore, Paragraph 180 of the Framework says that if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided, then planning permission should be refused. I have been unable to conclude that the development would not affect the integrity of European sites.

14. Taken together, the harm to the character and appearance of the area, and to the integrity of European protected wildlife sites, outweighs the benefits of the efficient use of the site for housing.

Conclusion

15. There are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Nick Davies

INSPECTOR