



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 February 2024

by G Roberts BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7th March 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/D/23/3334326

1B Mount Grace Drive, Poole, BH14 8NB

- 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 Brigstock against the decision of BCP Council.
 - The application Ref. APP/23/01064/F, dated 15 September 2023, was refused by notice dated 6 November 2023.
 - The development proposed is demolish existing garage and erect a replacement 2 storey detached garage with first floor recreational area (to be used by the occupiers of no. 1B Mount Grace Drive, Poole).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) was published in December 2023 after the appeal was lodged. Even so, the relevant design policies of the Framework remain unchanged, albeit some of the paragraph numbering is different

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 comprises a large modern two storey detached property set within a spacious plot. I understand that it was built as part of a pair with 1A Mount Grace Drive (No.1A), located to the west of the appeal site. The host property is set back from the road with its frontage enclosed by hedging, metal railings and gates, with a drive leading to off-street parking and a single storey detached flat roofed garage. There are several mature trees within the site and adjoining gardens, some of which are subject to Tree Preservation Orders. Together with existing hedging and other planting, these trees make a positive contribution to the character of the area.
5. Whilst the remainder of the cul-de-sac comprises similar large detached properties set within spacious plots, they do vary in terms of their design, style, scale and form, with a mixture of old and new including a number of similar modern (contemporary) properties. The prevailing pattern of development is, therefore, of large detached properties within extensive plots,

- with the individual properties set back from the road within a mature landscape of trees, hedging and other planting.
6. The appeal proposal seeks permission to demolish the existing garage and replace it with a two storey detached garage with first floor recreational area, to be used by the occupiers of the host property.
 7. The proposed building, as with the existing garage, would be sited well in front of the established building line that is formed by the host property and its neighbour, No.1A. As I observed on site, the existing single storey garage, with its flat roof, is modest in terms of its size, height and scale. As such, it is not visually prominent and is subservient to the host property. This would be replaced by a two storey building with pitched roof, that would be highly visible when approaching the appeal site, in particular from the west. The proposed scale, height and design of the new building would be out of keeping with the host and its immediate context, and would fail to respond positively to the prevailing built rhythm of the streetscene. Its harmful impact on the visual amenities of the streetscene would be accentuated by the proposed roof design that contrasts markedly with that of the host.
 8. The proposed building would not be subservient or proportional to the host property. As it would be sited in a similar position to the existing garage, close to the road, it would be highly visible from various public vantage points, dominating the landscaped character of the frontage to the appeal site and adjoining properties. It would represent a marked change in the character and appearance of this part of the streetscene and result in a development that would not sit comfortably on the appeal site. Whilst I accept that there are no objections to the proposal in terms of its impact on existing trees, the introduction of a large two storey building would result in a harmful change to the landscaped setting and character of this part of the appeal site and wider streetscene.
 9. Reference has been made to the planning permission that exists to replace the existing garage with a garage and store room (ref. APP/23/01063/F). However, the approved plans for that development show a single storey building whose roof form (profile) would match that of the main roof to the host property. As such, the proposed height, scale and design of the approved garage/store room would be subservient and proportional to the host property. It would represent a sympathetic addition to the site that would be in keeping with the design of the host, would not compete with it and would not be visually prominent within the streetscene.
 10. The Appellant suggests that the proposed building is proportional and that similar cladding to the host would camouflage the new buildings presence. For the reasons given above, I do not agree. The Appellant has also drawn comparisons with the development at 16 Mount Grace Road (No.16). However, I have not been provided with any planning background to No.16 or any details of the circumstances that led to this development or to when it was extended or built. Even so, I agree with the Council that this development is more in keeping with the flatted developments fronting Alington Road and is not as visible within the streetscene as the proposed building on the appeal site would be. Consequently, this example does not affect my findings on this issue.
 11. Whilst policy PP27 of the Poole Local Plan (November 2018) (PLP) does not explicitly state that buildings forward of the building line are unacceptable, it

does state that development will be permitted where it reflects or enhances the local pattern of development and neighbouring properties. It continues by stating that the latter will be assessed in relation to various criteria, including the layout, siting, building line and built site coverage, height, scale, bulk and visual impact of the proposed development. For extensions and alterations, the policy also requires development to be designed to respect and relate to the existing building, and to maintain and enhance any details that contribute positively to local character. This policy supports the findings I have reached above.

12. Accordingly, I find that the appeal proposal would be contrary to policy PP27 of the PLP and paragraph 135 of the Framework. The latter requires decisions to ensure that development adds to the overall quality of the area, is sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

Conclusions

13. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Roberts

INSPECTOR