The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 April 2017

by H Porter BA(Hons) PGDip IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 03 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/W/17/3168198
Mercury Marina, Satchell Lane, Hamble, Southampton SO31 4HQ

- 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 Marina Developments Ltd against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council.
- The application Ref F/16/79138, dated 23 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 14 November 2016.
- The development proposed is erection of 8 no. flagpoles.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Procedural matter

3. The appellant seeks to retain a total of eight flagpoles, six of which have already been erected close to the appeal site's junction with Satchell Lane and two outside the main boatyard at the lower portion of the access drive. The proposed plans show a 3.0 x 1.0m flag for each pole, which were not fitted at the time of my visit.

Reasons

4. Mercury Yacht Harbour is located towards the end of a sloping roadway, accessed off Satchell Lane. On approach to the site from the north, Satchell Lane is largely bounded by mature hedges and open fields; towards the south, a ribbon of residential dwellings populates the route as it leads towards Hamble Village centre. Due to the local topography, the yacht harbour itself is largely concealed from Satchell Lane, with only views of boat masts glimpsed at occasional intervals. In the immediate vicinity of the appeal site's junction with Satchell Lane, the location has a verdant, country lane character.

5. Six white flagpoles have been erected on the grass verge corner which rounds into the site's driveway. Though the flagpoles are not prominent from distant views along Satchell Lane, on approach to the appeal site their proliferation appears starkly at odds with the surrounding rural context. Individually, the height of each flagpole is not necessarily excessive; however, when seen

against the back-drop of open fields and relatively low signage, they appear overtly prominent and discordant. I appreciate that the purpose of the flagpoles would be to announce the yacht harbour entrance from Satchell Lane, as well as the various operatives within it. However, even without the installation of flags, the siting and proliferation of the six flagpoles has had a harmful cumulative impact, amounting to visual clutter that is detrimental to the character and appearance of the Satchell Lane scene. Though not installed at the time of my visit, the installation of the proposed flags would only exacerbate the harmful impact.

6. The Council do not object to the two flagpoles that have been erected outside the yacht harbour gate. I agree with their assessment and, on my visit to the site, found the siting of the two poles to be discreet and scale to be deferential to the boat masts and conifer boundary within the site. However, a lack of harm in relation to these two flagpoles, or in relation to highway safety, does not outweigh the harm identified with regards to the six positioned at the Satchell Lane entrance. As such, the development overall runs contrary to Saved Policies 1.CO and 59.BE of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review (2001 – 2011), adopted May 2006 and Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011- 2029, revised pre-submission version, February 2014. Insofar as these policies seek to protect the character and appearance of the countryside, resist structures which would demonstrably harm the character of the locality, and require development to be appropriate including in scale, design and siting.

Conclusion

7. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

H Porter

INSPECTOR