The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 May 2017

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 25 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/D/17/3172561
Green Acres, Blind Lane, West End, Southampton, SO30 2HJ.

- 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 Karl Reynolds against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council.
- The application Ref F/17/79839 dated 12 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 8 March 2017.
- The development proposed is described as construction of new Oak framed and timber clad barn style garage with office over on existing driveway for:
  1. Secure parking of cars and tractor (as existing barn storage is too remote from the house for security)
  2. Office use in connection with the agricultural use of the 2 hectares of land and existing barns forming part of the site.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the scheme on the character and appearance of Blind Lane and the surrounding countryside.

Reasons

3. Blind Lane is a narrow rural lane devoid of pavements and street lights and is primarily flanked by open countryside. There are several dwellings and other structures to the northeast of the Appeal site, on the opposite side of Blind Lane, which are set back from and largely screened from the lane by boundary trees and mature landscaped gardens.

4. The Appeal dwelling is the only dwelling on the south side of Blind Lane and it occupies a prominent position on the outside of a sharp bend in the lane. It is also located immediately alongside a public footpath, which runs adjacent to the southern boundary of the dwelling and its garden. Unlike the dwellings to the northeast the Appeal dwelling forms a prominent feature within the lane and the surrounding open countryside, due to its siting, size, colour and lack of boundary trees and hedges.

5. Amongst other things policies 9.CO and 59.BE of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2001 – 2011 (Local Plan) and policies DM1, DM26 and S9 of the Submitted

Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2029 (Emerging Local Plan) require proposals to take full and proper account of the context of the site and its surroundings and should provide a high standard of landscape design. Extensions to dwellings in the countryside should be proportionate in size to the host dwelling and neighbouring dwellings and should not materially make worse the impact of the host dwelling on the countryside.

6. Consistent with this the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. New development should respond to local character and add to the overall quality of an area.

7. The proposed garage would occupy a particularly prominent position immediately adjacent to the lane and the entrance to the public footpath to the south of the property. As a result of its combined siting, width, height and external staircase it would be visually dominant and would have an urbanising impact on its surroundings. Whilst it would partially screen the existing building from Blind Lane, it would extend the built development on the site closer to Blind Lane and the footpath and open countryside to the east.

8. From the public footpath to the south the proposed garage would simply add to the mass of the dwelling. At the same time, due to its siting, its visual relationship with the footpath entrance and the mature trees just outside the garden area would be cramped.

9. Overall, the harm that would be caused by the proposed building would materially outweigh the benefits for the Appellant and his family that would result from the proposed garage and home office. In reaching this conclusion account has been taken of the location of the oil pipeline and the concerns previously raised to an extension on the north side of the dwelling. Further, the harm that would be caused by the proposed building could not be dealt with by the imposition of conditions.

10. I conclude that the proposed scheme would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of Blind Lane and the surrounding countryside. Accordingly it would conflict with policies 9.CO & 59.BE of the Local Plan, policies S9, DM1 & DM26 of the Emerging Local Plan and the NPPF.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR