



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 August 2023

by N Perrins BSc (hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06.10.2023

Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/D/23/3322636

24 Grange Road, Hedge End, Hampshire SO30 2FB

- 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 Mrs Katherine Young against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: H/23/94848, dated 8 March 2023, was refused by notice dated 2 May 2023.
 - The development proposed is for the retention of partly reinstated boundary wall, add an additional return wall and roof to create carport. Carry out works to driveway, grading surface and the entrance. Installing permeable paving / stone to the driveway and installation of gates (partly retrospective).
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the retention of partly reinstated boundary wall, add an additional return wall and roof to create carport. Carry out works to driveway, grading surface and the entrance. Installing permeable paving / stone to the driveway and installation of gates (partly retrospective) at 24 Grange Road, Hedge End, Hampshire SO30 2FB, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans numbered EL01, BLOC01, PL01, LOC01 and FL01.
 - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those described on the application form and shown on the approved plans;
 - 3) The entrance gate provided must open into the site, as well as being set back a minimum distance of 4.5 metres from the back edge of the footway.
 - 4) Within 3 months of the date of this permission a scheme for biodiversity enhancement and landscaping to include permanent bat and bird nest boxes, planting on the northern boundary of the car port, and gaps within boundary treatment to provide access for small mammals, shall have been submitted to in writing with the local planning authority. The approved scheme details shall be implemented within 6 months of the date of this decision and thereafter retained and maintained for their designed purpose.

Preliminary Matters

5. The Council's decision notice has a different description of the appeal proposal than that used on the planning application form. I have not seen any correspondence to confirm there was agreement to change the description of development and the Appellant has stated at section E of the appeal form that the description has not been changed. I have used wording from the application form that I consider suitably describes the proposed development.

Main Issues

6. The main issues in this appeal are the effect of the proposal on:
 - a) The character and appearance of the area; and
 - b) Biodiversity.

Reasons

Character and appearance

7. The appeal property is a two storey detached house located in the urban area of Hedge End. The property has been subject to renovations and extensions and appears in the street scene as a modern two storey house with white render and grey coloured roof tiles. The property is set back from the road behind a large frontage area that, at the time of the site visit, was being re-surfaced. The topography of the site slopes downwards from the road resulting in the appeal property being on a lower ground level than the road. The character of properties and their boundary treatments in the immediate surrounding area is mixed with a wide range of designs and styles evident.
8. The proposal comprises a number of inter-linked elements, some of which are retrospective. The Council does not refer to the proposed works to the driveway or installation of the 1.6m high gates in their reasons for refusal. Accordingly, I consider that there is no dispute between the parties over these elements and I agree that they are acceptable in planning terms. The sole area in dispute is the car port at the front of the appeal site, which is under construction.
9. At the time of the site visit the walls of the car port had been completed and rendered white with a grey asphalt roof, which ensures it assimilates positively with the design of the host dwelling. The topography at the appeal site has the effect of the car port appearing to be set into the ground and largely appearing as a boundary wall when viewed from Grange Road. The rendering that has been used along with the topography ensures that the structure, as a whole, appears consistent in terms of scale and height as other boundaries in the area. I therefore do not agree that the appearance, now it has been rendered, is utilitarian or out of character with the wide range of structures and boundary treatment in the area which comprises garages, fences and walls as well as landscaped verges.
10. In terms of its wider impact on character and appearance, frontage areas along Grange Road are largely visible from the public domain and form a spacious context for the properties. In this case, whilst the car port is situated forward of the main dwelling adjacent to the road, there still remains a sufficiently large driveway to retain a deep recess to the main dwelling. Although, maintaining

deep setbacks maintain frontage planting the street scene has changed substantially over the years and from when the Hedge End, West End and Botley Character Area Appraisal for was adopted in 2008 somewhat eroding this vegetated streetscene. In this context the design approach used by the appellant does not appear as out of place with the diverse character of development and frontages along the surrounding street scene as it exists today.

11. Nonetheless, the proposal would be enhanced through the introduction of landscape planting on the western boundary of the car port. With such a condition, I consider that the appeal proposal would maintain the spacious setting of the site, the soft verges found locally and would complement the surrounding streetscenes.
12. The appellant has also provided information to highlight that the car port is needed to serve a practical purpose to enhance the security at the property by being able to store a car and help screen other vehicles on the driveway from direct view. The Council consider that the same outcome could be achieved through a boundary wall and gate. Whilst this might be the case, an alternative design is not before me and as I found that the design of the proposal is acceptable, I have only applied limited weight to its security benefits.
13. For the reasons I have set out, the proposed development would integrate well with the character or appearance of the surrounding street scene of Grange Road. Consequently, the proposal accords with Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2022) and the guidance contained in the Council's Quality Places SPD (2011) and Character Area Appraisal for Hedge End, West End and Botley SPD (2008), which expects development to be well-designed with a high-quality appearance in terms of scale, setting, layout, massing, landscaping and appearance. It would also be consistent with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character.

Biodiversity

14. There is concern regarding the removal of a front boundary hedge in 2016. The removal of the hedgerow does not appear to be related to the development subject of this appeal as it occurred at least 7 years ago and I therefore question whether it is relevant to the determination of this appeal. Nonetheless, what is clear is that Policy DM11 (c) of the Local Plan requires a net gain of biodiversity on all development sites.
15. In this regard, the appellant has indicated that there is an opportunity to provide biodiversity enhancements through providing landscaping along the western boundary of the car port. I consider that this is necessary for the development to provide a biodiversity net gain as required by the development plan.
16. The Council have indicated that there are records of hedgehogs near to the site, which would require a suitable opening to be provided within the boundary treatment and gates across the driveway. This is again a matter that can be addressed in a suitably worded condition.
17. Accordingly, I conclude that through the addition of a suitably worded condition to secure biodiversity enhancements from the proposed development would not

cause harm to biodiversity. Consequently, the appeal proposal accords with Policy DM11 of the Local Plan, which seeks a net gain of biodiversity on all development sites.

Conditions

18. I have considered which planning conditions are required having regard to the tests contained in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and the conditions suggested by the Council. I have not included the standard condition requiring implementation within three years of the date of this decision as the proposal is already being constructed at the site. I have included a condition to require that the proposal must be built in accordance with the specified approved plans for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
19. The Council has suggested a condition to ensure the car port is finished in a render colour and texture to match the main dwellinghouse, which I agree should be included to ensure a satisfactory visual appearance for the site and surrounding area.
20. The Council has suggested a condition to control the access gate including its position from the back edge of the footway to maintain highway safety. I agree that the requirements suggested by the Council are necessary to achieve this.
21. In terms of biodiversity, I have reviewed the Council's proposed conditions and consolidated them into a single version to require the submission of a biodiversity scheme within 3 months of this decision to ensure the required biodiversity measures can be secured and maintained. The condition also secures landscaping as discussed as being necessary earlier in this decision regarding character and appearance.

Conclusion

22. For the reasons given above, the proposal is consistent with the policies of the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations that would lead me to a different conclusion. I conclude that the appeal should be allowed, subject to the conditions specified.

N Perrins

INSPECTOR