The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 February 2011

by Philip Willmer Bsc Dip Arch RIBA

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

Decision date: 15 March 2011

Appeal Ref: APP/X1735/D/11/2144557
5 Beech Grove, Hayling Island, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO11 9DP.

- 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 J Hewson against the decision of Havant Borough Council.
- The application Ref APP/10/00592, dated 25 August 2010, was refused by notice dated 26 October 2010.
- The development proposed is described as a garage to front of property.

Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue to be the effect of the proposed development on the streetscene in Beech Grove and on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The properties on the east side of the road fronting Beech Grove are in the main set well back from the road behind low walls/fences and, due to limited boundary and garden planting, the front gardens are generally open in character.

4. From what I saw only number 1-3, a care home, has a building projecting significantly in front of the established building line. While this may well have previously been a garage, as suggested by the Council, it now appears to be used as an outbuilding in association with the care home. It is set in approximately 6.0 metres from the site's boundary to the back of pavement and is within a front garden which has a wide frontage extending to some 35.0 metres and therefore it does not visually dominate the front garden area. Furthermore, due to its location close to the rear of the property on the corner of Tournerbury Lane and Beech Grove and established screen planting, I found it not to be particularly prominent when entering Beech Grove from Tournerbury Lane.

5. The proposed garage, in contrast to the structure in front of number 1-3, would be set only 2.8 metres from the front boundary and would be built in a plot

whose frontage is less than half that of number 1-3 and with relatively open gardens to either side. Accordingly the new garage, although designed in itself to an acceptable standard, would dominate the front garden area of the host property because it would be sited closer to the road and within a significantly narrower open plot. Furthermore, as a result of the appeal site's more exposed location away from the junction of Beech Grove with Tournerbury Lane, the garage here would be significantly more prominent in the street scene. Having regard, therefore, to the open front gardens that characterise Beech Grove, I consider that the proposed garage would appear as a prominent alien feature.

6. I appreciate that there would be the opportunity to introduce intensive planting to the site boundaries as suggested by the appellant to screen the development. However, this in itself would change the prevailing character of the area. I also note that the access to the existing single garage to the rear of the property is narrow and I accept that this may restrict to some extent access and egress to the garage. However, based on what I saw, I do not consider that it is virtually impractical to use the garage as suggested. Accordingly, while sympathetic to the appellant's desire for a replacement garage to the front of the property, I do not consider that either of these considerations outweigh the harm that I have identified.

7. I conclude in respect of the main issue that the proposed development would cause material harm to the streetscene in Beech Grove and thereby the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to the objectives of saved Policy D1 of the Havant Borough District-Wide Local Plan adopted September 2005 and Planning Policy Statement 1: *Delivering Sustainable Development* as they relate to the need for development to both respect and enhance local character.

Conclusions

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

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR