

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 May 2016

by Megan Thomas Barrister-at-Law

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

Decision date: 25 May 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/B9506/D/16/3145227

The Lodge, Sway Road, New Milton, Hampshire BH25 5QU

- 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 S Weal against the decision of the New Forest National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref 15/01002, dated 22 December 2015, was refused by notice dated 17 February 2016.
 - The development proposed is "change of driveway materials for previously passed vehicle entrance".
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for tarmacadam driveway at The Lodge, Sway Road, New Milton, Hampshire BH25 5QU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 15/01002, dated 22 December 2015, subject to the following conditions:
 - (1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - (2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 287-1-15, 287-2-15, 287-3-15, 287-4-15 Rev 1, 287-5-15 & 287-6-16.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development on the planning application form is "Change of driveway materials for previously passed vehicle entrance". The application sought permission to change the materials for the driveway which had been approved pursuant to planning permission ref. 15/00421 dated 12 August 2015 as pea shingle. I have altered the wording in the formal decision above to "tarmacadam driveway" as I consider this does not prejudice the appellant and is less ambiguous and more precise than the longer description. The development sought has already taken place, however I am obliged to consider the proposal put forward in the submitted plans.
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Main Issue

3. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the New Forest National Park.

Reasons

4. The Lodge is a detached dwelling situated within the New Forest National Park. Much of the dwelling is obscured by boundary fencing or vegetation. It is accessed via a driveway at the western end of its plot direct from Sway Road. There are electric gates which are set in away from Sway Road, allowing a vehicle to pull off the road and wait for the gates to open, or to wait to enter Sway Road once the gates have closed on exiting the site.
5. The proposal is to use tarmac on the funnel of driveway between the electric gates and Sway Road. A drainage channel is also shown. A previous planning permission specified that the funnel would be predominantly pea shingle permeable driveway with a small tarmac strip where the entrance met Sway Road. The disputed area of tarmac shown in the current appeal is approximately 46 sqm (about 10m long and about 4m wide).
6. I agree with the Authority that the interface between driveways and public roads can make important contributions to the character and setting of the National Park and regard must also be had to the cumulative impact of unsympathetic materials used on hard surfaces. In this case however, the immediate streetscene is not particularly rural in appearance or ambience. Sway Road in this locality is busy with fast-moving vehicles. The junction with Brockhills Lane is opposite the appeal site and that is a tarmacadamed lane. Given the landscaping margins alongside the funnel specified as part of the 2015 planning permission and the limited expanse of tarmac, I do not consider this particular proposal would be harmful to the character or appearance of the National Park. I also note that the scheme incorporates drainage and surface water would drain to nearby ditches.
7. Consequently, I conclude that the proposal would not unduly harm the character or appearance of the National Park and would not be in conflict with policies DP1 or CP8 of the New Forest National Park Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD (2010) or the Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document. In the interests of proper planning and certainty, I have imposed a condition which ties the development to the scheme submitted in the approved plans.
8. Having taken into account all representations made, for the reasons given above I allow the appeal.

Megan Thomas

INSPECTOR