



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 January 2022

by Nick Davies BSc(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11th January 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/B9506/D/21/3280714

Oaklands, Road From A31 To Brook Via Canterton, Brook SO43 7HD

- 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 Christopher Biggin against the decision of New Forest National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref 21/00223, dated 5 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 16 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is increase roof height of carport; add overhang to carport roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for increase roof height of carport; add overhang to carport roof at Oaklands, Road From A31 To Brook Via Canterton, Brook SO43 7HD in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/00223, dated 5 March 2021, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following condition:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: DR1 – Plans and Elevations; DR2 – Site Location and Layout Plan.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the description of the development from the appeal form, as it accurately describes the proposal, and is more concise than that given on the application form.
3. The development has already been carried out, therefore I am considering this appeal retrospectively.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, including its visual impact on the landscape of the National Park, and whether it preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Forest Central North Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. Oaklands is a characterful red-brick house with a plain clay-tiled roof, which lies in the centre of a loose cluster of three dwellings on the south of the road leading into Brook, to the east. It occupies a spacious plot and has a range of single storey outbuildings to both sides. The dwellings to either side also have large gardens, which accommodate detached garages. The group of dwellings

is surrounded by open countryside, and they are all set behind roadside hedging. The land on the opposite side of the road is open verge with mature trees. Consequently, the locality retains a rural character.

6. The site lies within the New Forest National Park, which is a landscape designation of national importance. Paragraph 176 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) says that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks. Furthermore, it advises that the scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited.
7. The site also lies within the Forest Central North Conservation Area (the CA). The Council's Conservation Area Character Appraisal (the CACA) describes the CA as an area of historic landscape and settlement which has developed its unique character over more than a thousand years. The significance of the CA is derived from the mixture of historic buildings from various eras, and the survival of historic boundary banks, ditches, hedges, and field systems that illustrate centuries of land usage. The CACA states that designation of the CA seeks to ensure that the rural qualities and character of the area are preserved, all new development respects the special character of the area, and historic and architectural features are retained.
8. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires me to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA. Furthermore, paragraph 199 of the Framework states that, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
9. The carport is set back from the road and lies to the south east of the house. The evidence indicates that it was constructed approximately ten years ago, so is immune from enforcement action. More recently, a section of the roof has been raised by 700mm and a roof overhang of 500mm has been added. It is these works of alteration that are the subject of this appeal.
10. Viewed from the road, the carport is largely concealed by the high roadside boundary hedge. On close inspection, I saw that it could be glimpsed through the hedge, but my visit was in January. It is likely that at most other times of year the increase in foliage would result in it being completely screened. It is not readily visible over the access gate, as there is a tall evergreen yew hedge within the garden that obscures it from view. Consequently, in public views from the road passing the site, the relatively minor alterations that have been carried out to the existing structure are barely discernible.
11. The rear of the car port can also be seen across open fields from the south. In these views it is experienced as part of a continuous line of development, comprising Tile Cottage and its garage; Oaklands and its outbuildings to either side; and Canterbrook Cottage and its garage. The modest increase in the height of the rear wall of the car port has been carried out in vertical timber slats to match the rest of the building. Furthermore, from this direction the building is viewed against a backdrop of trees. Consequently, within this melange of structures of varying heights, the small increase in the height of part of the car port is hardly noticeable.

12. Policy DP37 of the New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016-2036 (the Local Plan) permits outbuildings where a number of criteria are satisfied. Although slightly increased in height, the carport is still much smaller and lower than the house. It is also set further back on the site, and is of a more utilitarian character. It therefore retains a subservient relationship to the dwelling. It is located within the residential curtilage and, at the time of my visit, was in use for purposes incidental to the dwelling, specifically the storage of vehicles, logs, garden furniture and other domestic paraphernalia. Being open-fronted, it is not suitable for additional habitable accommodation. Extensive outdoor amenity space remains, including ample parking provision in addition to that provided within the carport. There is, therefore, no conflict with any of the criteria, so Policy DP37 of the Local Plan supports the proposal.
13. The increase in the height and extent of the car port is extremely limited, and it has been carried out in matching materials. The building is set well back from the road and is screened from close views by existing vegetation. In longer views it is seen within an existing cluster of buildings against a backdrop of trees. I therefore conclude that the development does not result in any harm to the National Park landscape or to the character or appearance of the CA. Furthermore, the proposal meets the criteria set out in the Local Plan for outbuildings. Consequently, the development complies with Policies SP17, DP2, DP18 and DP37 of the Local Plan, which seek to ensure that development is contextually appropriate and sympathetic in terms of its scale and appearance, so as not to erode the National Park's character.

Conditions

14. As the development has already been carried out, conditions limiting the period within which the development must commence or requiring details of materials to be submitted for approval, are not necessary. I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant plans, as this provides certainty for all parties.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Nick Davies

INSPECTOR