

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 September 2016

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 03 October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/P1133/D/16/3155358

4 Manor Gardens, Kenton, Exeter EX6 8NQ

- 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 Michael Frewing against the decision of Teignbridge District Council.
 - The application, Ref. 16/01154/FUL, dated 21 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is a new porch extension; new dropped kerb and off road parking for two cars.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. I saw on my visit that the 'street scene' of this part of Manor Gardens comprises a detached bungalow and two pairs of semi-detached houses on its south west side. Although the buildings are of a conventional C20th design, their appearance is complemented by the long length of natural stone wall and in the case of Nos. 3 and 4 also by the grass slope rising from the road to the front wall of the houses.
 4. The combination of the grass slope (partly in the form of a highway verge and partly a front lawn) together with the attractive wall, the narrow lane and the views of the surrounding countryside results in a particularly pleasant rural character and appearance for this part of Kenton.
 5. The removal of a section of the wall, excavation of the slope and creation of a hard surfaced parking area for two cars in place of part of the lawn and verge would be a significant change to the appearance of the property and its surroundings. As the Council says, there would be an effect on the appearance of the house itself from a loss of 'symmetry' with No. 3 in terms of the front curtilages. However, I only give this limited weight because this could be lost in any event by a different frontage treatment that does not involve actual 'development' requiring planning permission.
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6. Of more importance is the effect on the street scene from the excavation of the grass bank and the formation of a more gradual slope comprised of hard surfacing both inside the property boundary to form the parking area and outside to form the vehicular access. I consider that this would substantially diminish the existing attractive rural character and appearance of Manor Gardens and replace it with a much more urban form harmful out of keeping with its surroundings.
7. I have paid careful attention to the grounds of appeal. I note the comment about keeping the grass verge, albeit with a membrane, but I have based my Decision on the details in the submitted plans. On the more general point I recognise that the proposal would make access to the house much easier and that this factor becomes increasingly important with the occupiers' advancing age. I also acknowledge that bringing in shopping and dealing with the refuse bins is a particular problem with the existing arrangement, especially having regard to the long stepped path. Nor do I disagree that an advantage of the scheme would be less parking and congestion on the narrow road.
8. However, whilst I sympathise with these points, I do not consider that they carry enough significance to outweigh the substantial harm to the appearance of the house and the character and appearance of this part of Manor Gardens.
9. Overall, I conclude that this harm would be in conflict with Policy WE8 of the Teignbridge Local Plan 2013-2033 adopted in 2014, and Government policy in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.
10. For the reasons explained above the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR