The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 October 2016

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 4 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3115/D/16/3158084
Fairview, Tokers Green Lane, Tokers Green, Reading RG4 9EB

- 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 Glenn George against the decision of South Oxfordshire District Council.
- The application Ref P16/S2390/HH, dated 11 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 5 September 2016.
- The development proposed is a two bay, timber frame, cedar shingle roof garage.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the locality.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to this detached house which is sited on the western side of Tokers Green Lane. On the eastern side is open land in agricultural use and farm buildings further along the Lane. The western side of the Lane contains a run of mostly detached house set behind planted frontages. The Lane does not have a footway and this, along with the other features of the area, combine to give a strong rural/semi-rural feel.

4. The houses on the western side of the Lane are set behind their front gardens which are free from buildings, although some contain mature planting and hedges.

5. The proposed double garage would be constructed of timber and would be sited within the front garden, wholly in front of the existing house, although to one side of it. Figures supplied by the appellant state that the building would be 3.38m high to the ridge of the roof and 5.6m by about 6m in depth and width. The appellant stresses the design qualities of the building and I note that the Council do not raise this in their objection to the scheme and state in the officer's report that the design is acceptable; a view that I agree with.

6. Although obviously smaller than the 2 storey houses, I consider that the proposed garage would still represent a sizeable structure which would not be wholly screened. Views of it would be available from the Lane over the existing

hedge and from the remainder of the frontage, as well as across the frontages of neighbouring properties. I appreciate that the design and style of the houses here varies and so there is no precise uniformity in appearance; however the frontages that I observed are all free from buildings and the imposition of the substantial size of the double garage here would appear significantly at odds with the pattern and grain of development. It would appear incongruous and whilst its siting may have been the product of some consideration by the appellant, in my view it would appear as a poorly conceived addition which would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the area.

7. I have already commented on the appearance of the garage and I appreciate that, taken in isolation, it is acceptable. However, I find that neither this nor the prospect of additional planting would be sufficient to outweigh the strong and harmful effects that the siting and size of the garage would have on the character of the area. The appellant states that a garage in any other position would have an unacceptable effect on the area or on residents. I am unable to comment as I have not seen any alternative schemes but I have made my decision based on this appeal scheme.

Conclusion

8. I conclude that the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area due to the siting and size of the proposed garage. This would not be off-set by any positive aspects that the proposal may bring with it. Therefore, taken as a whole, the proposal is contrary to Policy CSQ3 of the Core Strategy, Policies G2, D1 and H13 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan and the advice in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

S T Wood

INSPECTOR