

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 December 2016

by K E Down MA(Oxon) MSc MRTPI MRSB

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

Decision date: 14 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/16/3159176

10 The Drive, Ickenham, UB10 8AF

- 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 P Aujla against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 54269/APP/2016/1353, dated 29 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 2 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is erection of a detached garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. The appellant's agent has used a different application reference number on the appeal form from the one set out above. Although he has confirmed in writing that this is the correct reference, from the evidence it appears to relate to an earlier application for a detached double garage to the rear of the same property that was allowed on appeal (APP/R5510/D/12/2183640) on 8 November 2012 and appears to have been constructed. I have therefore used the reference set out in the Council's refusal notice dated 2 June 2016 for a detached garage to the front.

Main Issue

3. There is one main issue which is the effect of the proposed garage on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site, No. 10, comprises a large, modern 2.5 storey dwelling occupying a substantial plot. In common with most other dwellings in The Drive it is set back from the street behind a generous frontage. The area is characterised by other similar, low density residential development in a well vegetated setting which incorporates pockets of woodland and individual trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders. The wide grass verges between the carriageway and front boundaries add to the spacious, verdant character of the area.
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5. The proposed garage would be set back about 5m from the front boundary, which is marked by railings and a hedge, and set in from the shared boundary with No 12, marked by evergreen shrubs, by about 1m. The longer side of the garage, which extends to some 6.8m, would lie adjacent to the shared boundary and be clearly visible from the public realm, across the open frontage of No 12 and above the boundary vegetation. It would appear excessively large and visually intrusive in this view, competing with the main dwelling and detracting from its importance as the primary building on the plot. It would also be visible from the area of protected woodland to the south-west of No 10 and through the gateway to the property. Overall it would be unduly conspicuous in the street scene and incongruous in an area characterised by undeveloped frontages, resulting in unacceptable harm to the spacious, open character of the area.
6. I saw that there are a number of other detached garages and outbuildings on frontages in The Drive. On the whole these were less conspicuous than the appeal proposal, being set further from the highway, in closer proximity to mature trees and/or partially screened by more substantial boundary vegetation. Nevertheless, they were visually obstructive and had a negative effect on the street scene. In my view they do not represent a good reason for accepting further intrusive development in this generally open area.
7. The appellant points out that the garage has been designed to complement the existing house in terms of materials and appearance. However, that would not overcome the harm that would result from its siting in a prominent location on the visible and open frontage.
8. It is therefore concluded on the main issue that the proposed garage, owing to its siting and scale, would be materially harmful to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area. In consequence it would conflict with Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 – Strategic Policies (Adopted November 2012) and Policies BE13, BE15 and BE19 of the London Borough of Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan (adopted 1998) Saved Policies 27th September 2007 which, taken together, expect all new development to improve and maintain the quality of the built environment and in particular to harmonise with existing buildings and the street scene in terms of layout, scale and form.
9. Turning to other matters, the appellant argues that the proposed garage would not harm the living conditions of occupiers of 12 The Drive or impact on any trees. That may be so but it would not in any case provide a justification for allowing a development that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.
10. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised, including those of third parties, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

KE Down
INSPECTOR