

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2017

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: 09 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M2270/D/16/3160849

24 Manor Park, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 8XP

- 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 Trevor Houghton-Berry against the decision of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
 - The application, Ref. 16/505408/FULL, dated 14 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 10 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is a detached oak framed garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed garage on the character and appearance of the Manor Park 'street scene'.

Reasons

3. The Council's concern relates solely to the siting of the proposed garage in that it would be to the front of the host property, contrary to the Tunbridge Wells Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2006. This is considered to be contrary to the established pattern of development, with a detrimental impact on the street scene and character of the locality.
 4. However, I saw on my visit that Manor Park is a low density residential area with No. 24 one of a number of substantial detached properties of varied design set well back from the road on large plots in a verdant setting. As a result, the dwellings and their gardens are seen individually rather than viewed collectively as part of a cohesive street scene. This applies particularly to No. 24, which is on a bend in the road and is set well back from the adjoining property to the south.
 5. I therefore see no objection to the proposed garage being positioned in the front garden. The lack of any alternative and the security considerations arising from the absence of a garage both add weight to the justification for such a position.
 6. However, with a siting at a minimum of only a metre away from the road, I consider that the structure would be poorly related both to the dwelling itself
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and the more regular building line that starts with the adjoining house on the southern flank.

7. Even allowing for the restricted visibility along Manor Park because of the bend, in this particularly forward position the building would appear obtrusive and incongruous. A re-siting along the southern boundary a sufficient distance to exclude the currently proposed footprint would in my view resolve this problem, albeit that the driveway being comprised of gravel as presently proposed rather than a hard surface would be all the more important in this altered position. This aspect of a revised proposal could be the subject of a condition.
8. Whilst I have had regard to the grounds of appeal, I conclude that as presently proposed the proposed garage would be harmful to the character and appearance of Manor Park. This would be in conflict with Policy EN1 of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2006 and Government policy in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012. Core Policy 4 of the Council's Core Strategy of 2010 has also been cited in the Refusal Notice, but I consider this to be too strategic to have meaningful relevance to the appeal scheme.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR