

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 April 2017

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 04 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/X0415/D/17/3168538

Greenview, 37 Church Grove, Little Chalfont, Buckinghamshire, HP6 6SJ.

- 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 G Noble against the decision of Chiltern District Council.
 - The application Ref CH/2016/1743/FA dated 21 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 18 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is for a single detached garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the scheme on the character and appearance of the street scene and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Church Grove has two distinct parts. The western section has dwellings on both sides of the road, which are set back from the lane behind varied sized front gardens. The soft planting within these gardens, the grass verges and the open green area to the east of the dwellings all contribute to the sylvan residential character and appearance of this part of the lane.
 4. Within the northern section of the lane, where the Appeal property is sited, there are several dwellings on the west side of the lane, which are similarly set back behind front gardens. These properties are directly opposite the open countryside which projects up to the eastern edge of Church Grove. The soft planting and boundary hedges within their gardens, together with the grass and planted verges contribute to the spacious, verdant rural character and appearance of this part of the lane and the surrounding area. The gardens provide a soft transition between the open countryside to the east and the more intensive residential development to the west.
 5. Together the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), policies GC1 and H20 of the Chiltern District Local Plan (Local Plan) and policy CS20 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District require new development to be of a high standard of design, which respects and reflects the character of the street scene and the surrounding area. Ancillary domestic buildings should be modest in size and
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subordinate to the host dwelling and should comply with the principles of policies H13 and H17 of the Local Plan. These two policies relate to extensions and seek to ensure that they do not have an adverse effect on the street scene or the locality. Extensions should respect the scale and proportions of the host dwelling and should not be obtrusive. The Council's *Residential Extensions and Householder Development Supplementary Planning Document* (SPD) has similar objectives.

6. The proposed garage would be sited close to the low front boundary hedge and would project across approximately one third of the width of the front part of the site. Not only would it be prominent in views from the lane, it would dominate the front garden of the property. The close relationship between the garage and the front elevation of the dwelling, coupled with the extensive area of hard surfacing would result in the property appearing visually hard and overdeveloped.
7. As a result of these factors the proposed garage would have an urbanising impact on the lane and the surrounding rural area. This harm would outweigh the benefits of providing a garage for the Appellant and his family. In addition, in view of the proximity of the garage to the lane and its cramped relationship with the host dwelling it is not a matter that could be satisfactorily addressed through the imposition of a soft landscaping condition.
8. Reference has been made to the detached garage at 43 Church Grove. This garage is located alongside the dwelling at that property, rather than to the front of it. In addition, it is set back further from the lane than the proposed garage and is screened from the lane by mature hedges and trees. As a consequence it is not comparable to the Appeal scheme. It highlights the need to assess each proposal on its individual merits and in light of the prevailing planning policies.
9. I conclude that the proposed garage would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the street scene and the surrounding area. It would therefore conflict with policies GC1, H13, H15 and H20 of the Local Plan, policy CS20 of the Core Strategy, the SPD and the NPPF.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR