

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 May 2017

by Mr Kim Bennett BSc DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 24 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C1435/D/17/3169984
2 Langridge Close, Crowborough TN6 1XT

- 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 Giles Ellis against the decision of Wealden District Council.
 - The application Ref WD/2016/3070/F, dated 21 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 15 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is an integral garage conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the free flow of traffic within Langridge Close.

Reasons

3. The appeal property comprises a large five bedroom detached house located within Langridge Close which is a cul-de-sac. The Close accommodates seven properties in total which all have their own on-site parking in the form of integral garages. The access road has been sensitively designed so that it does not dominate the houses and as a result it is relatively narrow and with no formal footpaths on either side. Beyond the site is the A26 main road which was heavily trafficked at the time of my site visit and with moderate vehicle speeds as the speed limit is 40mph at this point.
4. The Council advises that the theoretical parking requirement for a property of this size in accordance with the East Sussex County Council Guidance for parking, is 2.09 on site spaces. However, given that the property is 5 bedrooms, it is likely that in practical terms, it could generate parking demand for at least 2 or 3 vehicles itself, in addition to any visitor vehicles. The appellant suggests that 3 on-site vehicles could be accommodated on the driveway, and whilst I acknowledge that would be physically possible, it would not be achieved in such a manner so that all vehicles could manoeuvre independently. In all probability therefore if the parking demand for the site was in excess of 2 vehicles on a regular basis, it is likely that any additional vehicles would have to park on the road itself, which is narrow as referenced above, and therefore may well cause obstruction of delivery or emergency vehicles as well as being unsightly from a visual point of view.

5. Alternatively additional vehicles would have to park in the turning head at the entrance to the site. In that respect, I observed that the turning head is the only one serving Langridge Close so that if it was blocked by a parked vehicle, other vehicles would have some difficulty in turning within the Close.
6. Apart from Langridge Close, the only other nearby option would be to park on the main road which in my view would be undesirable from a highway safety point of view given vehicle speeds outside the site.
7. I acknowledge that the level of on-site parking that would be available following the conversion of the garage would only be marginally below the standard required. However, because of the unusual road layout with lack of any practical on street parking, I consider that in this instance it ought to be rigidly applied. For the above reasons, I therefore agree with the Council that the loss of on-site parking provision at the site would be likely to cause highway safety issues within the Close which would be unacceptable.
8. I note the Council's point that it may also be difficult to resist further similar proposals elsewhere in the Close if this appeal was allowed. However, such consideration would depend upon the individual circumstances of the particular case at the time and in that respect I noted that there are a variety of driveway configurations within the Close, some of which can accommodate several vehicles on site. Accordingly that has not been decisive in reaching my findings above.
9. For the above reasons the proposal would be contrary to Policy SPO13 of the Council's Core Strategy 2013 and saved Policies TR3 and TR16 of the Council's Local Plan 1998 in that it would not provide a high quality safe living environment and the lack of on-site parking would create unacceptable traffic conditions.
10. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

Kim Bennett

INSPECTOR