
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 December 2018

by Andrew Owen BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18th December 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/J1860/W/18/3206172

Woodmans Cottage, Colletts Green, Powick, Worcester WR2 4RH

- 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 Giesler against the decision of Malvern Hills District Council.
 - The application Ref 18/00402/FUL, dated 14 March 2018, was refused by notice dated 30 May 2018.
 - The development proposed is described as "Material amendment to planning approval 16/00881/FUL to provide additional elderly relatives living accommodation with altered car parking and new garage arrangement to relocate new garage and increase size."
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The description I have used above is taken from the appeal form and the Council's decision notice as that describes the development more comprehensively than the description given on the application form.
3. At the time of my visit a dwelling was under construction on the site and had reached roof level.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. I understand the proposed dwelling is very similar to that already granted planning permission under ref 16/00881/FUL, and indeed the Council raise no objection to the house. However the previous permission included a single garage near the eastern boundary of the plot, whereas the garage now proposed would be further away from that boundary, closer to the front boundary, and larger.
6. The site is somewhat isolated being generally surrounded by fields. Moreover, the land falls gently away to the west and north east and the hedgerows on the boundaries of the site and the nearby fields are relatively short. This means the dwelling under construction appears as a prominent and remote building, visible from a significant distance in most directions.

7. The double garage would be subservient to the house and its size would not be untypical for a domestic double garage. However its scale would nonetheless be considerable with its ridge similar in height to that of the first floor windows in the house. Furthermore it would be significantly further forward of the house, at the front of the plot and indeed, would appear substantially detached from the house when seen from the west. Its forward position, in conjunction with the topography and modest hedgerows, would result in the garage having an unduly prominent appearance.
8. The combination of its scale and its prominent position would mean it would appear as an incongruous and dominant feature in the street scene detracting from the appearance of the property. Though its visual impact could be softened by the provision of landscaping along the boundaries of the site, I have no substantive details of any such planting, and in any event such landscaping would need to be very tall to screen the garage and so would also appear out of character with the openness of the vicinity.
9. I recognise that the garage would be in a similar position on the site to the house that previously existed here. However there is a clear difference between that previous dwelling, which was the primary building on the site, and the garage, which would appear as an incongruous addition to the new house. I also understand this part of the site is identified in the extant planning permission as a hardstanding area, but again that is very different in terms of its visual impact, to the proposed garage.
10. The proposed garage would therefore harm the character and appearance of the area and so would conflict with policies SWDP21 and SWDP25 of the South Worcestershire Development Plan and the Council's Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which all aim to ensure development complements the character of the area. Indeed, the SPD specifically identifies that garages in front gardens can overdominate the front of the property and detract from the street scene. This is directly applicable to the proposal.

Conclusion

11. Therefore, for the reasons given above, and taking account of all other considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR