



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 June 2019

by S A Whitehead LLB (Hons)

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/X1165/D/19/3227678

35 Langdon Fields, Churston With Galmpton, Brixham TQ5 0PJ.

- 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 and Mrs A Dyke against the decision of Torbay Council.
 - The application Ref P/2018/1201, dated 28 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 12 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a new garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I have used the address provided on the application form although I note it is expressed differently in other documents.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character of the street scene of Langdon Fields and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a large detached bungalow located in a cul-de-sac known as Langdon Fields. The cul-de-sac comprises a range of similarly large single storey detached properties set back from the road with relatively deep front gardens bounded by a mixture of low brick walls, hedges, shrub planting and occasional trees. Parts of these gardens have been hard surfaced and are clearly used for the parking of cars, and in several cases caravans. However, the absence of domestic outbuildings constructed thereon, together with the absence of high fences or walls bounding the front gardens and the set back of the dwellings from the road, gives the area an air of spaciousness that is an intrinsic part of its character.
5. The appeal property, prominently situated on a bend in the road, has a wide frontage bounded by a low brick wall and planting. A small building housing an electric sub-station is situated to the right-hand side, on the boundary with No. 8 Langdon Lane. Works to the appeal property were taking place at the time of my site visit. In this respect, I note from the Planning Officer Report, drawing no. 017-024-1-C as well as the appellants' appeal statement, that a scheme of extensions to the dwelling had been previously granted planning

permission by the Council. This earlier scheme involved the demolition of an attached single garage to the side of the property and the construction of a single storey extension in its place.

6. The appeal proposal involves the construction of a flat roofed garage to the front of the dwelling. Although the garage would be attached to the existing dwelling at one corner, it would be situated beyond the existing front wall of the dwelling on land currently forming part of the property's front garden. Whilst all dwellings in the cul-de-sac are not set back from the road by exactly the same amount, open and undeveloped front gardens are part and parcel of the area's character. I find that the proposed garage, due to its forward siting, scale and massing, would appear incongruous and would fail to relate to the established form and layout of surrounding development and would result in unacceptable harm to the distinctive character of the area.
7. The appellants have drawn my attention to the fact that properties within 'the adjacent road' have garages situated to the front of the dwellings and close to the road. Whilst this road is referred to as 'Langdon Road' by the appellants, I believe the appellants are actually referring to Langdon Lane, which adjoins Langdon Fields. From my inspection, the character of Langdon Lane is markedly different to Langdon Fields, comprising a range of two-storey detached dwellings, some on deeper plots than those in Langdon Fields. I do not consider the presence of forward sited outbuildings in Langdon Lane supports the appeal proposal, given that such outbuildings are not characteristic of the street scene of the cul-de-sac in which the appeal property is situated.
8. The appellants have also referred to a number of properties within Langdon Fields that already have garages and other extensions situated forward of the building line, and identify Nos. 12, 18, 22 and 27 in this regard. However, none of the garages and extensions identified project forward of the existing front wall of the dwelling they serve to the same degree as the appeal proposal, ie they are not sited entirely forward of the dwelling they serve. Furthermore, I am not aware of the planning history of these properties.
9. The appellants also reference planting on the front boundary of the appeal site and I acknowledge that this would have the potential to screen the proposed garage to an extent. However, planting takes some years to mature and the retention of trees or hedging cannot be guaranteed in perpetuity. Given my concerns regarding the inappropriate siting of the garage, this is not a matter to which I attach much weight. I appreciate, too, that the materials proposed to face the garage would match those of the existing dwelling. However, whilst I have taken this and the other factors discussed above into account, they do not outweigh the conclusion I have reached on the main issue.
10. I find that the development proposal would fail to acknowledge the local distinctive character of the area, would fail to relate to the surrounding built environment in terms of its scale, size and massing and would fail to integrate with the existing street scene of Langdon Fields, contrary to policy DE1 of the Torbay Local Plan (adopted December 2015).

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Sandra Whitehead

INSPECTOR