



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 July 2019

by Penelope Metcalfe BA(Hons) MSc DipUP DipDBE MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/X0415/D/19/3219677

Grove End, 10 Latchmoor Grove, Chalfont St. Peter, SL9 8LN

- 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 Peter Blewett against the decision of Chiltern District Council.
 - The application Ref PL/18/3697/FA, dated 4 October 2018, was refused by notice dated 3 December 2018.
 - The development proposed is open side carport and detached garage outbuilding to detached house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. I consider that the main issue in this case is its effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. Grove End is a substantial two storey detached house set in a large square plot within an established residential area which is designated as an Established Residential Area of Special Character. I understand that its present form is the result of recently constructed extensions approved under planning permission Ref. CH/2017/0868/FA. The house is set back from the road behind a timber boundary fence and has a gravelled area across the whole of the front garden. The immediate surroundings are characterised by large detached houses set in good sized plots with extensive mature landscaping. There are mature trees planted at regular intervals along the street which has grass verges to both sides, and the area as a whole has an attractive verdant character.
4. The relevant policies in this case include GC1, H13 and H20 of the Chiltern District Local Plan 1997, altered and consolidated in 2007 and 2011 (the local plan). Policy GC1 requires all development to be, among other things, of a high standard of design, in scale with its surroundings, and sited in accordance with the siting of existing adjoining buildings and the scale and alignment of the road on which it is to be located. H20 requires ancillary residential buildings to be modest in size and subordinate in scale to the existing dwelling and in accordance with the requirements of policy H13. The latter allows for residential extensions provided they do not adversely affect the character and appearance of the street scene. Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern

- District 2011 (the Core Strategy) also requires new development to be of a high standard of design which respects the character of the surrounding area.
5. Also relevant are policy H6 of the Chalfont St. Peter Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2028 and the Council's Supplementary Planning Document *Residential Extensions and Householder Development* 2013 (the SPD) which give further detailed advice on development proposals.
 6. These policies are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 (the Framework) which emphasises the importance of development proposals being of good design and sympathetic to the surrounding environment.
 7. The Council has not raised any objection to the open carport attached to the north side of the house and I saw during my site visit that this has been constructed. I consider that it is acceptable as it is constructed of materials to match the house and located unobtrusively at the side of the house.
 8. I consider that the proposed triple garage would be a large obtrusive feature, out of keeping with the general pattern of development in the street scene. It would be approximately 9m long and 5.5m wide, located approximately 1.5m from the front boundary. In the context of the site itself it would appear squeezed into the southeast corner and poorly related to the building line of the house.
 9. The main walls of the garage would be largely screened from the road by the timber fence which forms the front and side boundaries of the site. However, the roof would be clearly visible as a substantial and bulky element when viewed in juxtaposition with the house and within the street scene.
 10. There is no formal building line along this side of Latchmoor Grove, unlike the opposite side of the road where the building line is generally more regular. Most of the houses along the street are set well back from the road. My attention has been drawn to a number of examples in the vicinity where garages are located in front of the houses. Several of those which were visible to me during my visit are attached to the host dwelling and both those and the few detached garages are typically set further back from the front boundary than the appeal proposal, resulting in them being better related to the associated house and less obtrusive in the street scene. The detached garage to the front of No. 14 is of a much more modest scale than the proposal and appears to be an anomaly of some long standing. I do not consider that these examples amount to convincing support in favour of this proposal.
 11. The proposed garage would be constructed of timber cladding with shingle tiles and timber doors. In this respect I consider that the materials would be appropriate to the character and appearance of the street scene. However, I consider that it would not be modest in size, as required by local plan policy H20. The appeal site and the extended house are large, and the proposed garage would be subordinate in size to the house itself. However, the garage would be a substantial building in its own right and its size would be excessive in this location, particularly in terms of its siting forward of the dwelling and close to the front and side boundaries. It would appear as a very prominent and intrusive feature in the street scene and, in this respect, would not be consistent with local plan policies GC1 and H13 and the advice in the SPD.

12. The Council is concerned that the proposal might result in similar applications nearby. While it is an established planning principle that each case is determined on its merits, allowing this appeal would make it difficult for the Council to resist similar proposals. If this were to happen I consider that the resultant cumulative effect would cause unacceptable harm to the special character of this designated area.
13. I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area contrary to policies GC1, H13 and H20 of the local plan, CS20 of the Core Strategy and H6 of the Neighbourhood Plan and the advice in the SPD.
14. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

PAG Metcalfe

INSPECTOR