



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 January 2021

by S Leonard BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/N1730/D/20/3259291

Timbers, Gables Road, Church Crookham, Fleet GU52 6QY

- 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 Jago Keen against the decision of Hart District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/01137/HOU, dated 18 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 9 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is two bay car barn.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for two bay car barn at Timbers, Gables Road, Church Crookham, Fleet GU52 6QY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/01137/HOU, dated 18 May 2020, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
Location Plan Ref 0001-KC-XX-YTREE-LP01RevA;
Site Plan Ref 0001-KC-XX-YTREE-SP01Rev0;
Elevations Ref 0001-KC-XX-YTREE-ELV01Rev0;
Section Ref 0001-KC-XX-YTREE-SEC01Rev0; and
Ground Floor and Roof Plan Ref 0001-KC-XX-YTREE-GFRP01Rev0.
 - 3) No development shall commence until there shall have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority, a scheme of landscaping. The scheme shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, identify those to be retained and set out measures for their protection throughout the course of development.
 - 4) All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the use of the building or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site lies on the east side of Gables Road within a suburban residential area. It is occupied by a detached bungalow which is set back from, and at a higher ground level than, the road. Vehicular access is from Gables Road and serves a detached timber garage to the side of the dwelling and hard surfaced parking to the front of the building.
4. The area, which lies within Area F of the Gally Hill Character Area, as described in the Council's Urban Characterisation and Density Study, comprises low-density post-war housing, characterised by large houses set in spacious plots.
5. Gables Road has a pleasant and attractive established semi-rural, verdant character. This is due in part to its short, narrow, no-through nature, associated reduced vehicular traffic movements, lack of footpaths along the road edges, and property frontages characterised by trees, mature hedging and shrubs.
6. The dwellings on the east side of the road comprise a mix of sizes and designs, and are informally sited in relation to the street. They are generally set back from the road, behind soft landscaped frontages, and often at a higher ground level than the street. The dwellings on the opposite side of the road are more formally laid out, with a more regular front building line and siting parallel with the road frontage, with some being set back behind a separate shared access drive which runs parallel to the street. Well-established soft landscaping and trees are also a key feature of the western side of the road.
7. Garages feature commonly within the street. They tend to be set back from the road on its west side, due to the aforementioned distinctly different layout of development on that side of the road. However, on the appeal site side of the road, they have a more visible presence within public views from the street. During my site inspection, I observed a number of garages within the immediate vicinity of the appeal site, sited in various positions to the front of the dwellings, and comprising a variety of designs and materials, including hipped and pitched roofs, and timber clad walls. These structures contribute to the more ad-hoc arrangement of buildings which typify this side of the road. The proposed positioning of the garage adjacent to the site frontage would not be out of keeping with this general layout of built development.
8. In terms of its proposed size, I find that the appeal proposal would not be discernibly larger in scale than these other garages. It would not be unduly big, having regard to its function as a two-vehicle garage, and it would be appropriately smaller in scale, and lower in height than, the bungalow it would serve. These factors, together with its proposed position, distinctly separate from the host property, means that the new building would not appear over-dominant in relation to the existing bungalow. Neither would it have a negative impact on the setting of the host property when considered cumulatively with the existing outbuildings to the side and rear of the bungalow, given its proposed separation distance from the existing buildings.

9. The Council's Senior Tree Officer has advised that the appeal scheme could be constructed without harming frontage trees. The Council has also accepted that the existing hedging adjacent to the front boundary could be retained. From what I saw during my site inspection, I find no reason to disagree. As such, the proposal would not necessitate the removal of the existing soft landscaping at the front of the site which makes a positive contribution to the verdant nature of this side of the road. The retention of the trees and hedging could be ensured by means of a landscaping condition.
10. Whilst landscaping may not be expected to completely screen the new building, a degree of visibility would not be unduly harmful to the street scene, given the presence of other garages of a similar size to the appeal proposal, which are sited to the front of their dwellings and are visible from the street. In this respect I have had regard to the proposed hipped roof, rustic, barn style design of the proposal, which I find to be appropriate to the semi-rural nature of this part of the road.
11. In light of the above, subject to an appropriate landscaping condition, I find that the proposed car barn would be acceptable, and that it would not harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, the proposal would accord with Policy NBE9 of the *Hart Local Plan (Strategy and Sites) 2016 - 2032* (2020) and Saved Policy GEN1 of the *Hart Local Plan (Replacement) 1996-2006* (2020). These policies, amongst other things, aim to ensure that development proposals achieve a high quality design and are in keeping with the local character by virtue of their scale, design, height, prominence, materials, landscaping and siting.
12. For similar reasons, the development accords with guidance in Chapter 12 of the Framework which requires high quality design.
13. The Council's reasons for refusal also refer to Policy 10 of the *Fleet Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2032* (2019) (the FNP). However, the evidence before me is that the site does not fall within the FNP area. As such, I have not afforded weight to this Policy in my determination of the appeal.

Conditions

14. I have considered the Council's suggested conditions in accordance with the national Planning Practice Guidance. In addition to the standard implementation condition, it is necessary to define the plans in the interests of certainty.
15. In order to soften the built appearance of the car barn and to respect the semi-rural and verdant character and appearance of the area, I shall impose a landscape condition. I have not consulted the main parties in respect of this condition, since their views on this matter are evident from the appeal documentation.
16. I shall not include a condition suggested by the Council requiring the use of matching materials, since plan Ref 0001-KC-XX-YTREE-ELV01Rev0 confirms that the roof tiles will match those of the host dwelling and the proposed timber framed and clad walls are not designed to match the existing dwelling. I am satisfied that the details shown on this drawing are sufficient to ensure appropriate materials for the structure, in the interests of the appearance of the area.

17. Nor shall I add a condition requiring the garage to be used for no other purpose other than the parking of motorised vehicles, as suggested by the Council. The Council is seeking to ensure that the development is provided with adequate parking to prevent on-street car parking. I consider this condition to be unnecessary, having regard to the amount of proposed on-site parking in addition to the new car barn, including retained driveway areas to the side and front of the dwelling, as shown on drawing Ref 0001-KC-XX-YTREE-P01Rev0.

Conclusion

18. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should succeed, and planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

S Leonard

INSPECTOR