The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 January 2021 by Hannah Ellison BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Decision by Susan Ashworth BA (Hons) BPL MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/D/20/3260629
17 Glastonbury Drive, Middlewich CW10 9HR

- 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 Michael Hunter against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
- The application Ref 20/2627C, dated 18 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 20 August 2020.
- The development proposed is described as 'Construction of a detached brick and tile garage at the front of my home 5m wide x 6m long with 17.5 degree pitched roof 3.5m high. To be constructed 1 metre from boundary of neighbour and public footpath'.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. Permission is sought to erect a detached single storey garage in the front garden of a detached dwelling. The appeal site is read in context with the adjacent detached dwellings which follow a consistent building line. They are set well back from the highway with good sized front gardens and a large grass bank on Glastonbury Drive. There is a distinct lack of built form to the front of these dwellings. As such, this part of the street scene has a spacious feel.

5. The proposed garage would be sited close to the highway boundary and would have a considerable footprint. Due to its substantial size and its siting in an area which is typically devoid of development, this proposal would be an incongruous feature in the street scene which would erode the sense of spaciousness in the immediate locality. The use of materials to match the host dwelling and the wider area would not overcome these concerns.

6. The front boundary of the appeal site comprises a large, mature hedge which appears to be well established and would provide screening to much of the proposed garage. However, at the time of my site visit, there were views through the hedge to the front garden. This would be expected in certain

months of the year. Nevertheless, even if the hedge provided complete screening to the front garden, it would remain that the proposal would introduce substantial built form to the front of the site which is uncharacteristic in the locality. Moreover, the hedge is not a permanent feature and could die or be removed resulting in the garage becoming highly prominent in the public realm. The presence of the hedge is therefore insufficient in itself to justify inappropriate development.

7. The Council has raised concern that insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that the proposal would not cause harm to the health and life expectancy of the hedge. Given my findings above that the proposal would harm the character of the area by virtue of its siting, even with the presence of the hedge, there is no need for me to consider this matter further. The submission of details regarding the effect of the development on the hedge would not negate my concerns.

8. Reference is made to other examples of developments, which I observed at the time of my visit. The single storey extensions read as subservient additions which are attached to the side of the host dwellings and the garage at No 10 Tewkesbury Close occupies an inconspicuous position and is not significantly forward of the front elevation of the host property. These examples are not therefore directly comparable to the proposal before me and do not serve to justify this appeal.

9. Consequently, for the reasons set out, this proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Policies SD 2, SE 1 and SE 5 of the Cheshire East Local Plan, Local Plan Strategy 2010-2030 (July 2017) which collectively seek to ensure developments contribute positively to the character and identity of the surrounding area.

Other Matter

10. I acknowledge the pre-planning advice which the appellant received regarding this proposal however this is not a matter for me within the context of this appeal, which I have determined on its merits.

Conclusion and Recommendation

11. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal is dismissed.

Hannah Ellison
Appeal Planning Officer

Inspector's Decision

12. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Susan Ashworth
INSPECTOR