



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 February 2021

by Rebecca McAndrew BA Hons, PG Dip Urban Design, MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 March 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/X0415/W/20/3259128

Little Tara, 53 Monument Lane, Chalfont St Peter, SL9 0HY

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Steven Dudman against Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref PL/20/1230/FA is dated 15 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a detached garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Background and Main Issue

2. This appeal stems from the Council's failure to determine the application. The Council has confirmed that had it been in a position to issue a decision, it would have been a refusal. It advises that this would have been on the basis that the siting of the proposed garage in the front garden would be highly prominent and at odds with the established development pattern. The Council states that the appeal proposal would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the locality.
3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. Monument Lane is characterised by a variety of dwelling types, but which are mostly set back from the highway and benefit from good sized undeveloped front gardens. The proposed garage would be located to the front of the appellant's home, set back only a small distance from the front boundary of the site with the highway. I recognise that the proposed single garage would be a smaller structure than the scheme which was previously dismissed at appeal in 2015 (Ref: APP/X0415/D/15/3033958). However, the introduction of a building into this prominent location would be at odds with the existing building pattern in the area and would therefore be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.
5. Whilst the proposed garage would sit to the rear of a boundary hedge, this hedge appears to have been planted in recent years and therefore is not substantial. It is acknowledged that this hedge, combined with the front boundary hedge of No 51 Monument Lane, would screen the proposed

structure to a limited extent when viewed from the south. The hedge would do little to screen the garage when approaching from the north as there would still be open views into the site through the appellant's access point and over the largely open garden and low boundary treatment of neighbouring property, No 55 Monument Lane.

6. Whilst this hedge may grow in the future, given the height and position of the proposed garage it would be likely to remain visible within the streetscene. Also, there is no guarantee that it would be retained. As such, the hedge would do little to disguise the incongruous appearance of the garage and would not sufficiently mitigate the overall harm I have identified to the character and appearance of the area.
7. Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District (2011) states that development should reflect and respect the character of the surrounding area and those features which contribute to local distinctiveness. Chiltern District Local Plan (1997) (Consolidated September 2007 and November 2011) Policies GC1, H13 and H20 require that ancillary residential buildings are modest in size, that the siting of buildings be in accordance with existing adjoining buildings and that development should not adversely affect the character and appearance of the streetscene. Policy H6 of the Chalfont St Peter Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2028 requires a high standard of design which reflects the characteristics of the area. Residential Extensions and Householder Development Supplementary Planning Document (2013) advises against the construction of buildings forward of a dwelling, particularly in areas characterised by open frontages which are clear of built form (paragraph 38 ii). For the reasons I have set out above, the scheme would conflict with all of these requirements.

Other matters

8. I acknowledge that the appellant has amended the scheme which was previously dismissed at appeal, in an attempt to reduce the visual impact of the development. However, these amendments are not sufficient to overcome the harm I have identified to the character and appearance of the streetscene.
9. I recognise the appellant's aspiration to improve the quality of their accommodation. I have also considered representations made in support of the appeal proposal from various local residents. I note that one neighbour considers a garage to be a more visually pleasing solution for carparking than a hardstanding and that a number of properties in the area include high hedges along their frontages. However, none of the matters raised outweigh the harm I have identified to the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

10. I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations that would indicate that the appeal should be allowed. Therefore, for the reasons given, the appeal is dismissed.

Rebecca McAndrew

INSPECTOR