
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 August 2021

by Diane Cragg DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 August 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/X0360/D/21/3276245

142 Nash Grove Lane, Finchampstead RG40 4HF

- 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 B Kelly against the decision of Wokingham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 210517, dated 15 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 7 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is erection of detached double garage with new boundary line fence with electronic gates.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. On 20 July 2021, the Government published a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Other than a change to the relevant paragraph numbers, the revised Framework does not materially alter the national policy approach in respect of the issues raised in this appeal and I am satisfied no parties have been prejudiced by my having regard to it.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. Nash Grove Lane is a narrow lane with a rural character. Properties near to the appeal site are predominantly detached dwellings of various design in spacious plots set back from the lane frontage. Front boundaries are largely defined by boundary walls, fences and hedges which limits the views into front garden areas. Some properties have detached, or integral garages sited forward of their main front elevations.
5. The appeal site is a detached dwelling which formerly had the appearance of a single storey property but is currently being extended to provide first floor accommodation. It is the end property before an area of open space, which I noted at my site visit is accessible from the lane and enclosed by mature trees.
6. The proposed garage would be sited 2 metres back from the front boundary and 1 metre in from the side northern boundary. It would project significantly forward of any adjacent development and would be prominent on the approach to the site along the lane from the south. Because of its height and size and

- particularly because of its proximity to the front boundary the garage would appear obtrusive in the street scene. Further, the garage in combination with the proposed boundary treatment and the additional height and size of the main dwelling, would result in a significant amount of built development on the plot which would be incongruous with the rural character of the lane.
7. Although the appellant indicates that some light landscaping would be provided, the gap between the proposed front boundary treatment and the side elevation of the garage would not be sufficient to accommodate any meaningful tree and shrub planting.
 8. I appreciate that planning permission has previously been granted in the adjacent garden for a detached garage. The approved plans indicate that the location of the garage would be further back from the front boundary and a proposed landscaping scheme would assimilate the garage into the site surroundings. The previous approval for a garage on the adjacent site does not lead me to a different conclusion on the appeal scheme.
 9. At my site visit I noted the siting of other garages along the lane. These are mostly set further from the front boundary than the appeal proposal and in landscaped plots. They are not prominent structures and the balance of the landscaping and built form within plots is appropriate to the character of the lane. The form of surrounding development does not alter my conclusions in respect of the appeal proposal.
 10. Overall, I conclude that the development would harm the character and appearance of the area and would conflict with Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Wokingham Borough Adopted Core Strategy January 2010 and Policies CC01 and CC02 of the Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan February 2014 which collectively seek high-quality design, appropriate to the character of the area. It would also conflict with the Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document where it seeks to ensure development is well designed and contributes to local character. The Framework aims to ensure that development adds to the overall quality of the area and in this regard the development would conflict with it.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations that would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

Diane Cragg

INSPECTOR