



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 March 2022

by Mr JP Sargent BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4 April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/F3545/D/21/3289606

16 Heatherset Way, Red Lodge IP28 8JN

- 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 Parrott against the decision of West Suffolk Council.
 - The application Ref DC/21/1707/HH, dated 8 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 12 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a new detached garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. As submitted the proposal was shown to have a pyramidal pitched roof. Just before the application was determined the appellants submitted plans showing a garage with a flat roof, but I understand those were not the plans against which the application was considered, they are not the ones cited on the decision notice and they are not the ones I have assessed under this appeal.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal property is in an estate of relatively modern housing, and stands on the west side of Heatherset Way just as it turns sharply eastwards. It is the last in a row of houses of comparable designs that runs north from Larkspur Close. While these houses are laid out in a staggered arrangement, they are set back similar distances from the carriageway behind relatively deep front gardens. However, because it is by the bend in the road the appellants' front garden extends slightly further forward than the others. Moreover, fencing to the front of these properties is not particularly high and, when taken with the depth of the gardens and the similar house designs, this side of the road has a strongly uniform, open character.
5. This sense of openness is further enhanced by the playground that lies to the north. Although separated from the appellants' property by a tall fence, from the south the trees on the far side of the playground are apparent beyond, giving an appreciation of the open space in between.
6. The garage would be at the very front of the appellants' garden, and would project appreciably above the fence that runs along the plot's northern

boundary. As a result, and given the greater length of this garden, when looking northwards from Larkspur Close it would sit as an isolated feature away from the front elevation of the house, more or less across the end of this stretch of road. In my opinion, these circumstances mean it would be discordant in the streetscape, and would relate poorly to the uniform nature of development on the west side of the road. Furthermore, from this direction it would enclose the road, and it would erode the pleasing sense of openness that is experienced as a consequence of the relatively deep gardens and the playground beyond.

7. The opposite side of this length of Heatherset Way is defined by the tall fences of various bungalows, with their gables, outbuildings and hedging visible above. To my mind though that is a distinctly different character to the more open nature of the western side, and so is not a basis to allow the discordant development before me. Opposite 20 Heatherset Way there is a garage block, but that is a much lower structure, is of a different design to the proposal, and is tucked away, substantially concealed from the streetscape behind boundary fencing against a bungalow. Therefore, that block does not lead me to change my findings.
8. The garage would be of a design that is commonly found in suburban estates. That though does not mean it is necessarily suitable in the proposed position. The scheme would conceal parked cars, but they are an accepted part of the street scene, they are not as tall as the garage and they are transient features. It may be possible to put up fencing 2m in height along many of the front garden boundaries of No 16 as 'permitted development'. I would not expect that to enclose the entire frontage though so views through could still be possible, and again the garage would project above. Therefore, while I have taken these factors into account, they do not offer a basis to allow the appeal.
9. When approaching from the east the proposal would not be seen in such a uniform and consistent streetscape, and visually it would relate far more closely to the appellants' house. Therefore, in this view it would not be unacceptably discordant.
10. Accordingly, I conclude that when seen from the south the proposal would detract unacceptably from the character and appearance of the area because of its discordant siting in the streetscape and its effects on openness. As such it would conflict with Policy DM24 in the *West Suffolk Joint Development Management Policies Document* and Policy CS5 in the *Forest Heath Core Strategy Development Plan Document* which together, among other things, require ancillary development in the curtilage of a dwelling to respect the character and appearance of the immediate and surrounding area and reinforce local distinctiveness.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons stated I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

JP Sargent

INSPECTOR