



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 March 2022

by L Douglas BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/T2215/D/21/3289040

206 Birchwood Road, Wilmington, Kent DA2 7HA

- 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 Alex Wilkin against the decision of Dartford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref DA/21/01238/FUL, dated 23 July 2021, was refused by notice dated 24 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is a single story detached garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single story detached garage at 206 Birchwood Road, Wilmington, Kent DA2 7HA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DA/21/01238/FUL, dated 23 July 2021, 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: B2 Proposed Side Elevation, B3 Proposed Front Elevation, B4 Proposed Rear Elevation, B5 Proposed Side Elevation from North, B6 Plan of Proposed Garage.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing house, as shown on the approved plans B2 Proposed Side Elevation, B3 Proposed Front Elevation, B4 Proposed Rear Elevation, B5 Proposed Side Elevation from North.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have amended the description of the development proposed to delete unnecessary text from that provided in the application and appeal forms.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site is occupied by a large, detached house which is set back from the highway behind a gated driveway. There are a mix of housing sizes and styles along Birchwood Road, but the appeal site is typical of the prevailing character of its immediate surroundings, where long plots are enclosed by tall boundary planting, railings, and walls.

5. A spacious, open setting is created by the fields on the opposite side of Birchwood Road and the positions of dwellings set back from the highway, behind driveways and small landscaping strips. Nearby, I saw examples of large garages constructed between the front elevations of houses and the highway which did not restrict the open character of the area.
6. The proposal would have a pitched roof with a gable end facing the highway, to mirror front facing gables on the house. Its external materials would match the rendered ground floor and tiled gables of the house. Its overall appearance would be sympathetic to that of the property.
7. As a double garage with a pitched roof, it would be a substantial outbuilding; however, its scale and bulk would be commensurate to the house and plot, and it would reflect the large sizes of neighbouring houses and garages. Its positioning in front of the house would also be similar to neighbouring garages, within an extensive driveway set behind a tall front boundary wall and gate. It would not, therefore, appear as an unduly prominent or intrusive feature in the street scene, and nor would it detract from the open character of the area.
8. The proposed garage would not harm the character and appearance of the area and would accord with Policies DP2 and DP7 of the Dartford Development Policies Plan (2017). These require, amongst other things, development to comprise good design which responds to and retains local character, with consideration given to how the height, mass, scale and siting of proposals relate to neighbouring buildings and the wider locality.

Conditions

9. It is necessary to attach a condition requiring development to commence within the relevant timeframe. It would also be reasonable and necessary to attach conditions specifying the approved plans and requiring the external surfaces of the proposed garage to match the existing house, as shown on those plans, in the interests of clarity and to ensure the development would appropriately blend with its surroundings.

Conclusion

10. There are no material considerations that indicate the application should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons given above, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

L Douglas

INSPECTOR