



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 August 2022

by J Davis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8th August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/X0415/D/22/3297452

17 Chartridge Lane, Chesham, HP5 2JL

- 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 Lambourne against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref PL/21/4819/FA, dated 6 December 2021, was refused by notice dated 14 February 2022.
 - The development proposed is new detached double garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The main parties confirm that planning permission¹ for a replacement dwelling on the site was granted in 2021. At the time of my site visit the pre-existing dwelling had been demolished and the site cleared.
4. The appeal site comprises a large plot of land with a wide frontage onto Chartridge Lane. This section of Chartridge Lane comprises mainly large, detached houses that are located within landscaped plots. The dwellings are well set back from Chartridge Lane and mostly sit behind deep front gardens with mature hedges and other landscaping along their front boundaries. Levels along Chartridge Lane fall gently, with No 17 being on lower land than No 19 to the north west.
5. The proposed double garage would be to the front of the consented replacement dwelling, close to the front boundary of the site beyond which is the footpath adjacent to Chartridge Lane. It would have a width and depth of over 6 metres and would an eaves height of about 2.75m and a ridge height of approximately 4.25m. It would be positioned in the southern corner of the site

¹ LPA ref. PL/21/2664/FA

where site levels are at their lowest. The existing ground level would also be excavated which would further lower the height of the garage. New soft landscaping of 2 metres in height is proposed along the front boundary of the site.

6. The Council's Residential Extensions & Householder Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) advises that care needs to be taken in the siting of garages, particularly in areas characterised by open frontages. In these areas it is unlikely to be acceptable to site a garage forward of a dwelling as this would disrupt the existing pattern of development.
7. At my site visit I noted that garages and other outbuildings within front gardens are not a characteristic of the immediate surrounding area. Whilst I note the forward projecting garage at 23 Chartridge Lane, this garage is close to the front elevation of the dwelling and remains set back from the road frontage such that it is not visually prominent in the street scene. The appellant also highlights a further example at 67 Chartridge Lane. However, this property is some distance from the appeal site, beyond the junction of Chartridge Lane and Penn Avenue. Whilst No 67 does have a large front extension, it is not viewed in the same context as the appeal site and I therefore place little weight on this example as a precedent for the appeal proposal.
8. I agree that the proposed garage would be subordinate in size and scale to the host dwelling and has been designed to be in keeping with it. However, due to its size and in particular, its siting significantly forward of the host dwelling and in close proximity to Chartridge Lane, I find the proposal would be a highly prominent and visually intrusive feature of the street scene. Thus, it would be at odds with the established pattern of development along this section of Chartridge Lane and would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area. Furthermore, it would be contrary to the advice contained within the SPD.
9. The proposed soft landscaping would potentially help to screen the proposed development. However, the garage would have a height of over 4 metres and as such, would be clearly visible above the hedging even when mature. Furthermore, in my experience, the introduction of landscaping is not normally sufficient to justify poorly sited development.
10. The appellant has commented on the pre-application advice that was given by the Council concerning a proposal for a replacement dwelling and garage on the site prior to the approval of application PL/21/2664/FA. Based on the limited evidence before me, it appears that the Council highlighted their likely concerns regarding the impact of a garage to the front of the proposed dwelling on the street scene and as such, have not introduced 'new grounds'. In any event, I am required to determine the appeal on its merits.
11. Overall, I conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It therefore conflicts with the aims of Policies GC1, H13, H15 and H20 of the adopted Chiltern District Local Plan (as altered and consolidated)² and the SPD, to ensure that new development is of a high standard of design that would not adversely

² Chiltern District Local Plan – 1997 (including alterations Adopted 29 May 2001) Consolidated September 2007 & November 2011

affect the street scene. It would also be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework insofar as it seeks high quality design.

Conclusion

1. For the above reasons, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Davis

INSPECTOR