

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 December 2022

by Mr C J Tivey BSc (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/X0360/D/22/3305761

Oak View House, Baird Road, Arborfield, Wokingham RG2 9PL

- 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 & Mrs D O Connor against the decision of Wokingham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 221517, dated 18 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 14 July 2022.
 - The development proposed is for erection of a single garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The application site formerly constituted part of the rear garden of 26 Bramshill Close, Wokingham and the submitted planning application form refers to the site now being known as Oak Tree View, Baird Road, Reading. However it is clear from the main parties appeal submissions that that address is also incorrect with the host dwelling actually being known as Oak View House. Furthermore the subject garage was in situ at that time of my site visit. I have determined the appeal upon this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the appeal proposal upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The new single garage building has been constructed in a position significantly forward of the dwelling which it is proposed to serve and noticeably projects beyond the notional building line created by the flank elevation of the Co-op supermarket adjacent. I note that there are some other examples of garages being located within front garden areas, however ultimately each case must be assessed on its own merits and specifically with regard to the proposal before me, the subject building is highly prominent within the street scene, which is accentuated by the white render finish.
5. The shade of the render finish could of course be changed, but nonetheless I consider overall that the positioning of the garage is such that it causes

demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the street scene. I acknowledge that the siting of a garage to the rear or side of the dwelling would not be possible due to the restricted space and therefore siting to the front would be necessary, although I note contrary to the Council's design guide.

6. I accept that the garage in the current position would not obstruct views to or from the street per se, neither would pedestrian access be inhibited, however they are not the only considerations with the matter of character and appearance being the main issue.
7. Therefore I conclude that the detached garage by virtue of its siting and finish has an incongruous appearance which is visually intrusive within the street scene and consequently gives rise to demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the area. This is contrary to Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010) which only support planning permission being granted for development proposals that, amongst other things, maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment and require proposals to be of an appropriate layout, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design.

Conclusion

8. Having regard to the above and all other matters raised by the appellants, I conclude that the appeal be dismissed.

C J Tivey

INSPECTOR