



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 February 2025

by **C Coles MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: **11 MARCH 2025**

Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/D/24/3358200

72 Mescott Meadows, Hedge End, Hampshire SO30 2JU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Gareth Jenkins against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is H/24/98357.
 - The development is described as 'to convert a small area of garage into an office space that will be used during office hours only size is approx. 6' x 7' so enough room to fit a small car in the garage space'.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The above description of development is taken from the application form. The Council altered the wording when validating the application to read 'Retention of garage conversion to office (Retrospective application)'. This is more concise, although retention is not an act of development under the Act.
3. At the time of my site visit the garage had already been converted. I have dealt with the appeal on the basis that permission is being sought retrospectively for the conversion of part of the garage to office space.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on parking provision and highway safety in Mescott Meadows.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a three-bedroom mid terrace dwelling within a modern residential estate. The property was originally approved with a single garage plus a driveway for one car. This level of parking provision would comply with Eastleigh Borough Council Residential Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document 2009 (SPD). The SPD requires two parking spaces for a three-bedroom dwelling where on-plot parking is being proposed. Since the appeal property only has a single car driveway, its garage would need to be counted to meet the SPD standard, notwithstanding that its dimensions fall below the size expectations set out in the guidance.

6. The design and layout of Mescott Meadows is such that space for vehicles is at a premium. There is some on-street parking, but the carriageways are narrow and in many places kerbside parking would block private driveways and the entrances to parking courts. There are double yellow lines within the garage court to the rear of the appeal property and signs from a private management company discourage parking other than in marked bays. Despite this, I saw numerous examples throughout the development of cars parked on pavements. My visit took place at noon on a weekday; therefore, the number of parked vehicles is likely to be higher in the evenings and at weekends. The development would have the effect of displacing a vehicle onto the public highway and there is no substantive evidence before me to demonstrate that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate this, without detriment to the safety of pedestrians and other road users.
7. The appellant contends the unconverted part of the garage is sufficient to park a vehicle. However, if a car were to be parked in the remaining section of garage the garage door would need to be removed or left open, which would compromise security. Parking would therefore be restricted to a single vehicle on the driveway to the front of the dwelling, resulting in the displacement of a vehicle onto the road. This would be detrimental to highway safety and would not comply with the minimum parking standards in the SPD. The evidence presented is not sufficiently robust to persuade me that a level of parking below the standard is justified.
8. It is put to me that the majority of garages are not used for parking cars. Whilst I have seen no evidence to substantiate this, even if it were true, it would increase the importance of keeping as many garages as possible available for vehicles to maximise parking opportunities for residents. Hence, the appellant's argument about the use of the existing garages does not carry any significant weight in favour of allowing the appeal.
9. Accordingly, I conclude the development would conflict with Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) policies DM1, DM13 and DM14 insofar as they seek to ensure that development provides adequate off-highway parking taking account of the minimum parking requirements in the adopted SPD.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

C Coles

INSPECTOR