The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 September 2016

by Joanne Burston BSc MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 22 September 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/B3438/D/16/3154378
New House, Glebe Gardens, Cheadle, Stoke on Trent ST10 1YW

- 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 C Quinn against the decision of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.
- The application Ref SMD/2016/0263, dated 21 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 20 June 2016.
- The development proposed is the construction of detached domestic garage, closure of existing vehicular access and formation of new vehicular access.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction of detached domestic garage, closure of existing vehicular access and formation of new vehicular access at New House, Glebe Gardens, Cheadle, Stoke on Trent ST10 1YW in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref SMD/2016/0263, dated 21 April 2016, subject to the following conditions:

    1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.

    2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plan: 1409-03 (plans and elevations, dated 10 April 2016)

    3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the garage hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building known as 'New House'.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the street scene.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located on a residential cul-de-sac. Development along the road is mixed in terms of scale, with detached bungalows and two storey detached dwellings. Many of the dwellings have detached or integrated garages within their plots. Whilst the dwellings vary in scale and form, a characteristic feature along Glebe Gardens are the modest open front gardens, usually set to grass, which provide a visual breathing space to the built development.

4. The proposed garage, access and hardstanding would be situated to the east of the host dwelling, occupying a narrow strip of garden. The garage would be single storey in height, constructed with similar materials to the host property and screened from the neighbouring bungalow to the east by existing mature hedging. Whilst the garage and vehicular access would result in an incursion into the garden of 'New House', the proposed development would not have a demonstrably harmful effect on the existing street scene.

5. In particular, given its position close to the existing hedge and tucked towards the northern boundary at this point, the garage would be screened when approaching the site from the east. Indeed when visible the garage would be seen in the context of neighbouring dwellings and ancillary structures.

6. Furthermore, whilst the main dwelling is set back from the street frontage, from my observations at the time of the site visit, the introduction of a detached building closer to the front of the site would not be an uncharacteristic form of development in the area, where the building line is staggered and other buildings are positioned close to the road. Additionally the retention of a 2m wide grass service strip and creation of a front garden to the west would retain the verdant open character of the area. As a result, the proposal would not appear visually intrusive or cramped in relation to the host property or the street scene.

7. My attention has been drawn by both parties to previous appeal decisions on this site[1]. However the details of these schemes are not before me and in any event, I have determined the appeal on the basis of the material planning considerations and the evidence from which I have reached my own conclusions. Furthermore, I acknowledge that my colleague in his decision (ref APP/B3438/W/15/3004452) stated that "*with that land that would remain within the plot for landscaping, and subject to sympathetic use of external materials, the proposal would complement the street scene*". However, the replacement of the existing access with a lawn and the grass service strip would provide sufficient landscaping to complement the existing street scene hereabouts.

8. The proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the street scene, and I therefore conclude that the development would not conflict with Policy DC1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Core Strategy) and supplementary planning guidance 'Design Guidance for New Dwellings and Extensions to Dwellings' (SPG). This Policy and SPG, amongst other matters, requires the protection of the character and appearance of a locality through high quality design that respects local design features. The scheme would also comply with Paragraphs 58 and 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework that requires, amongst other matters, that new development should respond to and improve local character and quality of an area, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.

Other matters

9. In addition to those matters considered above neighbouring occupiers have raised concerns relating to the over dominance and loss of privacy resulting from the proposed garage. From what I saw on my site visit, I am not

[1] APP/B3438/A/13/2198639 and APP/B3438/W/15/3004452

persuaded, given the separation distance, change in ground levels and intervening landscaping, that the modest scheme before me would create an unacceptable overbearing visual impact or loss of privacy.

Conditions

10. For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning the development needs to be commenced within 3 years and carried out in accordance with the approved plan. In order to ensure that the development complements its surroundings the materials should match those used in the host property. I have required all these matters by condition, which reflects the requirements of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all matters raised, I therefore conclude that the proposal should be allowed subject to the conditions listed.

Joanne Burston

INSPECTOR