



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 June 2018

by Susan Ashworth BA (Hons) BPL MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4th July 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/N2535/D/17/3190965 Helm's Deep, Snelland, Lincoln LN3 5AA

- 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 Mrs Susan McLean against the decision of West Lindsey District Council.
 - The application Ref 136773, dated 24 August 2017, was refused by notice dated 31 October 2017.
 - The development proposed is single timber garage to front elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single timber garage to the front garden of Helm's Deep, Snelland, Lincoln LN3 5AA in accordance with the terms of application ref 136773, dated 24 August 2017 and subject to the following conditions:
 1. The development hereby permitted shall begin within three years of the date of this permission.
 2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site layout plan 1:500, Planning Details drawing no 96/17/01.

Preliminary Matter

2. Although the description of development refers to the front elevation it is clear that the proposal is for a garage in the front garden of the property. I have amended the description in my formal decision above.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. Helm's Deep is a detached bungalow situated within a small cluster of residential properties in the open countryside. It is positioned, as are those either side of it, back from the road behind a substantial front garden. The variety of dwelling types in the cluster, the amount of mature planting including boundary hedges, the varied layout of the dwellings and outbuildings, and their position in relation to the road, all contribute to the informal rural character and appearance of the settlement.

5. The proposed garage would be constructed in timber and would be of a simple design and appearance with a shallow pitched roof. The building would be of a modest size with a ridge height of 2.7m. It would be sited a few metres behind the mature hedging that bounds the front of the property. It seems to me that the garage would be proportionate in terms of its scale to that of the garden and as such would not dominate the property. Moreover, largely screened from view by the hedge, it would not be a prominent feature in the street scene.
6. There is no suggestion that the appellant intends to cut the hedge back. Nevertheless, I have taken into account the Council's concerns that the hedge is not a permanent feature. Should it die or become diseased I acknowledge that the garage would become more obvious. However, at my site visit I noted that outbuildings and domestic structures of various types occupy the front gardens of a number of neighbouring properties. These structures can be seen to varying degrees from the public highway and form part of the informal character of the area. Accordingly even if it were seen, the garage, which would be of modest scale and appearance, would not cause any significant harm to the character or appearance of the area.
7. On that basis the proposal would be consistent with policies LP17 and LP26 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2017 which seek, in various ways, to protect the character of a townscape including by ensuring a development relates well to its site and surroundings and by incorporating appropriate landscape treatment.

Conditions and Conclusion

8. The Council has suggested conditions in the event of the appeal being allowed, which I have considered. In the interests of proper planning and to provide certainty I have imposed the standard time limit condition and have specified the approved plans.
9. I have considered whether it would be reasonable or necessary to require the hedge to be retained and replanted should it die or become diseased. I note that the appellant would not object to such a condition being imposed. However, given the pattern of development in the area and the limited impact of the garage on it, and the length of time it would take for a newly planted hedge to become established, such a condition would be unnecessary and unreasonable and would not therefore meet the tests of the Planning Practice Guidance.
10. For the reasons set out above, and taking all other matters raised into account, the appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted.

S Ashworth

INSPECTOR