
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 October 2016

by Nicola Davies BA DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 11 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/X2220/W/16/3154657

Sondes Lodge, 14 Sondes Road, Deal CT14 7BW

- 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 Regina Kernoham against the decision of Dover District Council.
 - The application Ref DOV/16/00369, dated 11 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 27 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is the painting of external wall front facing.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant has indicated that the front wall of the property would be painted. I observed at my visit that the rendered parts of the frontage are currently painted, with a section of exposed yellow brick at first floor level. For the purposes of clarity I have taken the proposal to relate to the full frontage of this building. However, had the proposed painting related to only the repainting of the currently rendered part of the building, this would not have altered my conclusions in respect of the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The appeal site is located within Middle Street Conservation Area, which is a designated heritage asset. The main issue raised in respect of the appeal is whether the development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The Conservation Area comprises the seafront promenade with sea facing properties and close-knit terraced streets behind. This area includes a good number of historic properties, such as, the Time Ball Museum building and Deal Castle. Terraced town houses set behind uniform sea front buildings form the character of this part of the Middle Street Conservation Area within which the appeal property lies. These terraces, whether of uniform appearance or made up of a variety of architectural styles, such as, Sondes Road, contribute to the wealth of period buildings that characterise this part of Deal. The Article 4 direction, which provides increased levels of control to alterations to buildings in the area, reflects the importance of the appearance of these buildings to the
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significance of the heritage asset. Therefore any change to the appearance of this building should be carefully considered.

5. The properties along the south side of Sondes Road are of predominantly brick frontages. However, there is a small group of four full and part rendered painted properties at the eastern end of which this property forms part. The appeal property is of individual design and currently its ground and lower ground floor are rendered and painted a light cream colour, as is the first floor bay window. I observed that other properties are painted in white or pale colours and, notwithstanding the variation in design and colour, this limited palette creates a strong element of visual continuity between these properties.
6. The proposal seeks to paint the frontage in a mid green colour, although the window cills would be painted a pale cream yellow. As a result, the appeal building would be a deeper colour and bolder in its appearance than the other three properties within this group. The proposal would visually compromise the complementary character of this group of properties. The colour variation would be readily visible in the street and the resulting contrast would have a negative visual impact on this group of properties, which would result in an incongruous element that would be detrimental to the overall appearance of the street scene. As a result, the proposal would be an unsympathetic change to the host building.
7. I acknowledge that the colour green may previously have been present within this street scape and that other neighbouring roads also comprise painted properties. My attention has also been drawn to a property towards the western end of Sondes Road that has a bright blue painted frontage. This frontage, in my opinion, contrasts with the remaining street and has a discordant and conspicuous appearance for this reason. These matters do not justify the proposal or outweigh the harm identified above to this particular street scape.
8. For the above reasons, I conclude that the development would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and would result in harm to its significance.
9. Given the size and scale of the proposal relative to that of the Conservation Area, I consider there would be less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset. No specific policies of the development plan have been drawn to my attention in relation to this appeal. However, in accordance with paragraph 134 of the Framework, I must weigh the harm against the public benefit of the proposal.
10. The repainting of the frontage would increase the visual prominence of the appellant's bed and breakfast business in the street scene, which may bring about personal benefit for the appellant. However, given the nature of the proposal and the scale of the business, any public benefits or benefit to the local economy, in my view, would be limited, and insufficient to outweigh the harm identified. Accordingly, considered overall, I find that the proposal would be contrary to the aims of paragraph 17 of the National Planning Policy Framework, to achieve high quality design, take account of different roles and character of different areas and conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Other matters

11. Some concerns have been raised about the processing of the planning application. However, this is not a matter that is primarily before me in respect of this appeal, but is an issue for the local planning authority in the first instance. In any event, these concerns would not lead me to alter my findings above.

Conclusions

12. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Nicola Davies

INSPECTOR