

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 December 2016

by H Lock BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 19 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/V1505/D/16/3158883

46 Mapleford Sweep, BASILDON, Essex, SS16 4BT

- 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 Derek Birkett against the decision of Basildon Borough Council.
 - The application Ref. 16/00685/FULL was refused by notice dated 8 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as retrospective consent for porch and consent for proposed single storey rear extension (due to change in materials from granted consent 15/00660/FULL).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Background and Procedural Matter

2. Planning permission was granted for a single storey rear extension and new replacement front porch at the property in 2015, under application ref. 15/00660/FULL. The approved plans specified that the walls to both extensions would be rendered, although the colour finish was not indicated.
3. A front porch has been constructed at the site, but it appears to be larger in area than the addition approved under ref. 15/00660/FULL. The materials also differ in that the side walls have been completed in western red cedar cladding. The front wall has been rendered and finished in a dark grey colour.
4. Although described as a retrospective application for the porch, the addition as built does not appear to correspond with the size and fenestration shown on the plans the subject of this appeal. I have therefore determined the appeal on the basis of the development shown on the plans as 'proposed' in respect of both the porch and the rear extension.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extensions on the character and appearance of the street scene.

Reasons

6. The appeal property is an end-terrace house that is prominently located in the street scene, and it is visible on approach along Mapleford Sweep and also Furlongs. Although the original form and brickwork of the terraced houses is
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uniform there are differences in terms of the size, design and materials of their porches, and differing window styles. Within the wider estate, there is a range of front porches and extensions, and these vary in terms of materials, size, roof form and detailing.

7. In this context, permission has been granted for a front porch at the appeal site, and regardless of its materials it would appear distinct in size and form from the other porches on the terrace. However, the materials used in the porch as built (and proposed in this appeal) serve to emphasise the addition, and appear incongruous and discordant on the terrace. I note the appellant's aim for the cedar cladding to resemble the brickwork, but it is distinct in colour and pattern and does not aid in integrating the addition in the street scene. Although the appellant's intention is for the proposed extensions to harmonise with nature, the extended dwelling would be seen more readily in the context of the terrace and surrounding housing.
8. There is no objection in principle to the use of contemporary materials, but they must nevertheless respect the setting. I can appreciate the appellant's concern that placing dark grey render directly next to the brickwork would not be flattering to the house, but this colour would not be the only option available.
9. The appellant has drawn attention to timber cladding on properties in The Knowle and Clay Hill Road, but none appear to be of the same design and context as the appeal property, and as such do not have the same visual impact. In any case, there is no information before me to suggest that the use of such materials elsewhere required and obtained planning permission. I have also had regard to the wide range of materials used on other porches in the vicinity, but do not find that they support the use of the proposed materials.
10. Policy BAS BE12 of the Basildon District Local Plan Saved Policies 2007 (LP) seeks to resist development that would cause material harm to the character of the surrounding area, including the street scene. With this in mind, one of the supporting criteria (DC25) set out in the 'Development Control Guidelines 1993 and Alterations 1997' (DCG), is that materials should match or harmonise with those of the original dwelling. For the reasons outlined above, the materials used and proposed do not harmonise with those of the dwelling but contrast to a degree that would be harmful to the street scene.
11. With regard to the proposed rear extension, the impact of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbouring occupants was assessed in the previous application, and I share the Council's view that the proposal would be acceptable in this regard. Although the rear extension would be inset from the western side boundary, part of the side elevation would be visible above the fence line and across the adjacent open driveway. Whilst the use of cedar cladding on the rear extension would have less visual impact on the street scene, it would nonetheless be a discordant material next to the brickwork of the dwelling and terrace.
12. I therefore conclude that the use of western red cedar cladding to the proposed extensions would be harmful to the character and appearance of the appeal property and the wider street scene, in conflict with the design aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), and the objectives of LP Policy BAS BE12 and DCG DC25.

13. The Framework establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and part of its environmental strand is to contribute to protecting and enhancing the built environment. A core planning principle of the Framework is to always seek to secure high quality design. For the reasons given above the proposal would not comply with this principle, and would not therefore be sustainable development supported through the Framework. As a consequence, I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

H Lock

INSPECTOR