

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2017

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 09 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C1435/D/16/3164990

27 Millbrook Road, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 2SB

- 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 David Finn against the decision of Wealden District Council.
 - The application, Ref. WD/2016/1583/F, dated 20 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 30 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is a two storey front extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension on the appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene.

Reasons

3. The Council's concern is because of its height and bulk the proposed extension would be an 'unduly prominent and dominant feature', both unsympathetic to the appearance of the existing dwelling and detrimental to the street scene.
 4. I saw on my visit that in the street scene of Millbrook Road No. 27 reads with the adjoining No. 29 as a pair of buildings of the same design, albeit handed. This design is tailored to the particular siting with a single storey projecting front gable on the level of the road connected to the two storey main part of the dwelling on the lower land to the north.
 5. The appeal scheme would retain the single storey element but infill the space on its eastern flank with a two storey extension almost up to the boundary with No. 29. The ridge height of the addition would be higher than the existing ridge of the main part of the dwelling to the rear by virtue of it being positioned on the higher level and this is clearly illustrated in the drawings of the proposed east and west elevation. In my opinion these also show the somewhat awkward and contrived relationship between the existing and proposed two storey elements.
 6. I acknowledge that extent of these elevations that would actually be seen would be much more limited than appears on the plans because of the shielding effect of Nos 41 Eridge Gardens and 29 Millbrook Road. However, there would remain a number of aspects in public and neighbour views where the awkward
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relationship between the two storey elements and the dominance of the extension relative to the single storey gables of Nos. 27 and 29 would be perceived. The existing pleasing symmetry between the handed frontages of these two dwellings would additionally be lost and the overall effect would, as the Council argues, be one of an unsympathetic relationship with the host dwelling and a detrimental effect on the street scene. I accept that the asymmetric roof of the proposed gable picks up that characteristic of No. 34 opposite, but that property is one of a row of houses of the same design and read as such, rather than a somewhat unconventional extension to the significantly different appearance of No. 27.

7. The grounds of appeal provide a detailed analysis of other dwellings in the locality that have been extended. As regards the very similar addition to No. 19 Millbrook Road, although that property is the same original house type it has an entirely different context in the form of the contrasting design of the adjoining dwelling. In respect of the bulk and style of other nearby properties, some of the extensions suggested as justifying the appeal proposal are in my view less successful in terms of their effects on the original dwelling and the street scene than the Council might have hoped. I therefore do not regard these as justifying the appeal proposal. Furthermore, as with No. 19, the context is normally different and, as the Council points out, each extension must be assessed on its individual merits.
8. Overall, I conclude that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene. This would conflict with Policies EN27 & HG10 of the Wealden Local Plan 1998; Policy SPO13 of the Wealden District Local Plan Core Strategy 2013 and Section 7: 'Requiring Good Design' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR