
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 February 2017

by C J Leigh BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI

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

Decision date: 10 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/P1425/D/16/3164838

19 Christie Avenue, Ringmer, Lewes, BN8 5JT

- 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 Linda Ellis against the decision of Lewes District Council.
 - The application Ref LW/16/0866, dated 7 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 28 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is a new single 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 development on the character and appearance of the surrounding residential area.

Reasons

3. Christie Avenue is a pleasant residential street which has a distinct character at its eastern end, along with Delves Way, which sees pairs of semi-detached houses that have been designed in an imaginative way to give the appearance of detached houses. This is achieved through one of each pair of houses having their entrance on the side elevation of the house, and No. 19 is one such property.
 4. The proposed development would see a small extension on the front elevation of the house to provide a downstairs WC/wet room. I appreciate the wish to have this facility at the property. However, I share the Council's concern relating to the position and design of this addition. The siting of the extension on the front elevation of the building would upset the careful balance that is evident in the design of the pair of properties. This would be an unwelcome change to an otherwise consistent street scene.
 5. Saved Policy DES13 of the adopted Lewes District Local Plan 2003 states that *'in a street or area which has definite rhythm and similar style of dwelling, extensions in the front will not normally be acceptable'*. I consider such a circumstance exists in this case, and so the proposed development would conflict with that Policy and lead to the harm identified above. I note the appellant's reference to a front extension permitted by the Council at 34 Delves Way (ref. LW/01/0193). In my view, that historic extension has been harmful
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to the consistent appearance of the housing in that road, by upsetting a definite rhythm and similar style of housing, and so should not be a precedent for further harm; the current appeal is determined against the relevant adopted policies that now apply, and Policy DES13 indicates the Council's current position is to be against such extensions.

6. I also note the appellant's reference to front extension to the west of the appeal property along Christie Avenue, but those have been on properties of a different design to the appeal property, and so are not comparable in their effect on the character of the area.
7. I therefore remain of the opinion that harm would arise to the character and appearance of the area, and so there would be conflict with saved Policies DES13 and ST03 of the Local Plan, the general thrust of which is to seek to ensure new development respects the surrounding area. I recognise the appellant's wish to provide improved accommodation to the property, but this personal circumstance must be balanced against other matters of acknowledged importance, and in this instance the conflict with the adopted Local Plan outweighs other considerations. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

C J Leigh

INSPECTOR