
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 March 2017

by Grahame Gould BA MPhil MRTPI

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

Decision date: 25th April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z2260/W/16/3162805

Land rear of 17 Sea Road, Westgate on Sea, Kent CT8 8SA

- 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 Chris Lynch of Kentish Projects against the decision of Thanet District Council.
 - The application Ref F/TH/16/0367, dated 12 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 22 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is erection of 1 Nr detached 4 bedroom dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, including the Westgate on Sea Conservation Area (the CA).

Reasons

3. The development would involve the construction of a two storey, detached, dwelling in the rear half of the garden of 17 Sea Road (No 17). No 17 is a large property that is occupied as flats. No 17 is in an extensive mixed use CA.
 4. The majority of the development on Sea Road and its immediate environs is frontage development and the siting of the dwelling would be uncharacteristic of the historic pattern of development in the area. Notwithstanding the dwelling's backland siting, it would in part be visible from Egbert Road across the courtyard in front of the garage block behind 19 Sea Road. I therefore consider that the dwelling, when seen from Egbert Road, would look out of place. Although new boundary planting is proposed, it would take a considerable period of time to become established and it could not necessarily be relied on to provide long term screening for the views from Egbert Road. I therefore consider that the intended planting would not address the uncharacteristic siting of this development.
 5. While there are some examples of backland development in the area, such as the cul-de-sacs at Vestey Court and Wellington Close, those developments have been comprehensively planned and are not comparable in scale with the appeal development and, in any event, have been excluded from the CA. St Mawes is a small residential development, sited between recently
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constructed flat blocks¹ and Vestey Court, however, St Mawes in part reads as belonging to Vestey Court's streetscene. Given the previously mentioned characteristics of St Mawes I consider that it is not comparable with the appeal scheme. I am also of the opinion that the bungalows in Courtlands Way are not directly comparable with the appeal scheme because of their very discrete siting, which means they are not readily visible in the streetscene.

6. The siting of the dwelling would not be in keeping with the pattern of development found throughout much of the CA. I therefore consider that this development would fail to preserve the CA's appearance. The CA's character would, however, be preserved because the provision of a dwelling would be compatible with the CA's mixed use character.
7. For the reasons given above I conclude that the development would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area. There would therefore be conflict with Policy D1 of the Thanet Local Plan of 2006 and paragraphs 17, 58 and 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) because the development would neither respect nor enhance the appearance of the area.
8. While the development would give rise to some harm to the CA, that harm would be less than substantial when considered within the context of paragraphs 132 to 134 of the Framework. However, I consider that there would be no public benefits arising from the development outweighing the harm to the CA that I have identified.

Other Matters

9. Although the Council accepts that it cannot currently demonstrate the availability of a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (HLS), this development would make a very modest contribution to the HLS. The dwelling, because of its location within a town, would provide its occupiers with good accessibility to local services and public transport facilities. However, I consider that the previously mentioned social and economic benefits of providing one house would be outweighed by the harm to the character and appearance of the area that I have identified.
10. While there have been no objections from the occupiers of neighbouring properties that does not persuade me that this would be an appropriate form of development for this area. I saw no obvious signs of the dwelling's plot being disused and I therefore consider no particular benefit would arise from its redevelopment.

Conclusion

11. For the reason given above the appeal is dismissed.

Grahame Gould

INSPECTOR

¹ Kingsmead, San Remo, Ivyside and Almarina