
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 September 2017

by N A Holdsworth MCD MRTPI

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

Decision date: 24th October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L2250/D/17/3180156
31, Bybrook Field, Sandgate, CT20 3BQ

- 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 Anne Lutchford against the decision of Shepway District Council.
 - The application Ref Y17/0282/SH, dated 8 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 8 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is proposed loft conversion and erection of a rear external workshop.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal building appears as part of a pair of buildings located around the turning circle on one of the ends of Bybrook Field; no.31 (the appeal building) and no.30 (its neighbour). Both buildings have a similar appearance, low roof pitch, and orientation in so far as they relate to the road. As such they appear as a symmetrical pair of buildings. This symmetry helps to define the pair of buildings in relation to the surrounding suburban townscape.
4. The proposed development involves the reconstruction of the roof of no.31 to a substantially greater ridge height whilst retaining the existing height of the eaves, with dormer windows and a balcony on the side elevation of the building that would be visible from the street. In consequence, the proportions of the front gable wall facing the street would differ significantly from no.30, and the existing symmetry found between the two buildings would be broken. Because of its height and bulk the extended building would dominate no.30 and, in consequence, diminish its setting; resulting in an incongruous relationship to the detriment of the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
5. I observed a diversity of building styles along Bybrook Field, including buildings with steep roof pitches, dormer windows, and roof extensions. However, for the reasons set out above, in townscape terms I consider that the principal relationship is between the appeal building and no.30. The existence of other,

larger buildings in the surrounding area does not therefore justify the proposed development.

6. The development involves raising the roof of the host property to a considerably greater height and steeper roof pitch. It also involves the creation of an additional storey that would principally manifest itself through the three dormer windows and balcony area on the side elevation of the building. In my opinion, these alterations would fundamentally change the appearance of the existing building which is currently defined by a shallow roof pitch when viewed from the street. This brings the proposal into conflict with saved policy BE8 of the Shepway District Local Plan review (adopted March 2006) ("Local Plan") which requires that extensions to existing buildings should reflect the scale, proportions and roof line of the original building. For the reasons set out above, I consider that the extended building would have a poor relationship with the surrounding townscape. As such, I find that there are no grounds to make an exception to policy BE8 of the Local Plan on this occasion.
7. The proposed plans also show a single storey extension to the rear of the host building. The Council do not raise concerns about the effect of this extension on the character and appearance of the host building or surrounding area. I consider this part of the development would appear subservient to the host building, and I note that it would not be visible from Bybrook Field. As such, the harm associated with the proposed development is confined to the extensions and alterations to the main roof of the building.
8. I therefore conclude that the proposed roof extensions would harm the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area. The proposed development therefore conflicts with saved policies BE1 and BE8 of the Local Plan which, amongst other things, requires that new development accords with existing development in the locality. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal should be dismissed.

Neil Holdsworth

INSPECTOR