



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 July 2019

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/L2250/W/19/3224981

Upper Bemhurst, St. Nicholas Road, Littlestone, New Romney, Kent, TN28 8QA.

- 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 D Burgess against the decision of Folkestone & Hythe District Council.
 - The application Ref Y18/1567/FH, dated 8 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 13 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as proposed new roof with part gables and hips to provide additional residential accommodation and extension to existing external stairs and landing.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and the street scene.

Reasons

3. The Appeal site is located within a mixed residential area where there is a diverse range of dwellings of different ages and with varied designs, roof forms, ridge and eaves heights and external materials. Notwithstanding this, the form and design of the individual dwellings respect and complement each other, thus contributing to the coherent identity of the street scene.
4. The appeal building, which comprises two flats, occupies an exposed position within in the street scene due to its siting both adjacent to a vehicle turning head in the road and forward of the adjacent dwellings. This together with its contrasting design and appearance to the adjacent dwellings and in particular its continuous eaves line and pale blue coloured horizontal cladding above ground floor level, result in the appeal building being prominent within the street scene. It is quite distinct from the varied eaves heights, tile hanging, brickwork and white/cream render and mock timber framing of other dwellings on the same side of St Nicholas Road. The form and roof design of the appeal building is however consistent with the dwelling at 'Verite', which is located a short distance to the east. Although, due to its siting and subdued

colours/tones the dwelling at 'Verite' is readily assimilated into the street scene.

5. Collectively and amongst other things Policies BE1 and BE8 of the Shepway District Local Plan Review 2006 (Local Plan), seek to ensure that new development makes a positive contribution to its location. It should be of a high standard of design and external materials should be sympathetic to those predominating in the locality. Extensions should reflect the proportions and detailing of the original dwelling and should not have a detrimental effect on the street scene. Policies HB1 and HB8 of the Folkstone & Hythe Places and Policies Local Plan Submission Draft 2018 (Draft LP), are consistent with this. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), similarly states that new development should be sympathetic to local character, be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and add to the overall quality of the area, whilst optimising the potential of the site. It also explains that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
6. The resultant pitch and overall height of the building would respect that of other buildings along this stretch of St Nicholas Road. However, due to its combined front facing barn hip and crown roof design, the position of windows close to the top of the crown roof and the horizontal fibre cement cladding, the resultant building would appear top heavy and out of keeping with the host building and the street scene. More importantly, together with the blue painted horizontal cladding at first floor level, the resultant building would be totally out of keeping with the adjacent dwellings and would appear as a discordant feature within the street scene, where it would be highly prominent. As a result, the proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host building, the street scene and the quality of the local area.
7. In response to the concerns raised by the Council to the proposed additional horizontal cladding, the appellant has stated that external materials could be made the subject of a condition. However, no alternative materials or finishes have been suggested. Whilst potentially a change in materials could improve the appearance of the proposed extension, it would be unlikely to address all of the concerns raised in relation to the impact of the proposal on the host building and the street scene.
8. The proposal also includes an extension to the external steps leading to the first floor flat. The extended steps would respect the appearance of the existing steps and the front balcony. As a result, they would respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling and would not have an adverse impact on the street scene. At the same time the proposal would make effective use of the site and the additional accommodation would improve the living conditions of the appellant and their family. Whilst these things weigh in favour of the proposal, both individually and collectively they fail to outweigh the harm identified above.
9. I conclude that the proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host building and the street scene. Accordingly, it would conflict with policies BE1 and BE8 of the Local Plan, Policies HB1 and HB8 of the Draft LP and paragraph 127 of the Framework.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR