



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 August 2019

by Tim Crouch DipUD MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: Friday, 30 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/L3815/W/19/3228879

Rife Cottage, Piggery Hall Lane, West Wittering, Chichester PO20 8PZ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission under section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the development of land carried out without complying with conditions subject to which a previous planning permission was granted.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Andrew Matthews against the decision of Chichester District Council.
 - The application Ref 18/03121/DOC, dated 16 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 22 February 2019.
 - The application sought planning permission for two storey rear extension and creation of rooms within existing roof without complying with a condition attached to planning permission Ref WW/17/02506/DOM, dated 11 October 2017.
 - The condition in dispute is No 3 which states that:
3) Notwithstanding any details submitted no development/works shall commence until a full schedule of all materials and finishes and samples of such materials and finishes to be used for external walls and roofs of the building(s) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved schedule of materials and finishes unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
 - The reason given for the condition is:
3) Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interest of amenity and to ensure a development of visual quality. It is considered necessary for this to be a pre-commencement condition as such details need to be taken into account in the construction of the development and thus go to the heart of the planning permission.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The alterations to the existing dwelling are substantially complete and the material subject to this appeal is already in-situ. I have therefore considered the appeal on this basis.

Background and Main Issue

3. As noted, the permitted alterations to the existing dwelling are substantially complete. As part of the permission, a condition was imposed for the external materials to be used in the development to be approved by the Council prior to works taking place. The approved plans identified cladding as part of the design, but the material was not specified. The building has been constructed using 'Cedral' board in silver grey colour. This is a man-made, timber effect

product. The Council has discharged other materials used in the development but has refused the use of the Cedral boarding.

4. Therefore the main issue is whether the use of the cladding is acceptable given the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The extended property is now a chalet style bungalow with living accommodation in the roof served by dormer windows. Whilst not within a special designation, it has a rural location surrounded by countryside, individual trees and set behind a hedge screening the ground floor level. The vehicular access is to the side, providing clear views of the side elevation when passing along the road.
6. Whilst designed to have a wood effect appearance, the material has a sheen to it and a neatness that distinguishes it from a natural material. The product has a uniform, flat appearance which does not have the texture or depth of interest of a natural material. This is despite its moulded finish. It therefore appears unsympathetic to the rural open surroundings and strong mature native planting which frames the site. This low maintenance product also weathers more slowly and would fail to integrate with the setting over time, remaining stark whilst other external materials, such as the slate roof, will have softened more naturally into the surroundings.
7. Despite not being used on the whole building, the use of the material on the side elevation and around the dormer windows is visible in the street, which gives it significant prominence, as does the light colour contrasting against the slate roof and dark framed windows. This accentuates the harm.
8. I recognise that uPVC has been approved by the Council for use in the windows, soffits, fascia and guttering. However, these are less-substantial features where the man-made material is less prominent. I do not consider that the scale of the boarding complements this usage or the overall visual appearance of the extended house.
9. Therefore, I consider that the use of the cladding is not acceptable given the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, it would be contrary to policies 45 and 48 of the Chichester Local Plan (LP) (2015) and paragraphs 127 and 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) (the Framework). Taken together, and amongst other objectives, these require development, including the materials, to have a minimal impact on the landscape and rural character of the area, to sensitively contribute to its setting and quality, and to take the opportunities available to improve the character and quality of an area.
10. The Council also referenced LP Policy 2 in its appeal statement. This relates to the development strategy and settlement hierarchy and is less relevant to the proposal.

Other Matters

11. I have been provided with examples of other use of Cedral boarding on buildings within the countryside on the Manhood peninsula, albeit in a range of colours. However, these examples reinforce my conclusion that the material fails to have the natural characteristics of timber cladding and does not

integrate successfully within rural locations when used significantly on buildings. In any event, the fact that apparently similar development may have been permitted is not a reason, on its own, to allow unacceptable development. I have considered this appeal proposal on its own merits and concluded that it would cause harm for the reasons set out above.

12. The appellant quotes the Framework ("v3") stating "*decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles*". However, this paragraph no longer appears in the 2019 version released prior to the appeal statement being submitted. In any event, I do not consider that the unacceptability of an inappropriate material to be imposing a style or a particular taste.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Tim Crouch

INSPECTOR