



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 October 2019

by C Osgathorp BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/G2245/W/19/3232445

25 High Street, Edenbridge TN8 5AB

- 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 Adriano De Vito (Rondanini UK Ltd) against the decision of Sevenoaks District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00027/FUL, dated 3 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 10 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is construction of two storey side and rear extensions forming new upper floors, with new flat created within the proposed first floor accommodation and construction of new second floor mansard roof structure forming an additional two flats over. Flat entrance and bin stores are proposed on the ground floor.
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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 host building and the Edenbridge Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is located in a prominent corner position in the Edenbridge Conservation Area adjacent to the junction of High Street and Croft Lane. The elevations of the building are well-balanced and the original building is designed with symmetry. The building includes tall ground floor arched windows; pleasant brick detailing, and first floor sash windows. The scale of the building is limited by the 'L' shaped layout of the upper floor and the modest size of the roof. As such, the overall composition makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
4. I have had regard to the statutory duty imposed by Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('Framework') states that "*great weight should be given to the [designated heritage] asset's conservation*".
5. The proposed increase in the height of the roof would be acceptable in principle due to the varying heights of the buildings in the Conservation Area. However, the Croft Lane facing elevation would appear bulky due to the considerable

width of the mansard roof. Furthermore, the roof of the proposed side extension would have a flat front wall with patio doors and a flat side wall, which would appear at odds with the design of the proposed mansard roof above the original building. The overall form of the proposed development would fail to respect the symmetry of the existing Croft Lane elevation. Furthermore, the ground floor doors of the proposed extension would not align well with the first floor windows and their design and position would appear discordant with the host building.

6. In addition, whilst the proposed two storey extension would be set back from the existing building, it would fill the gap to the boundary with Croft House. I acknowledge that this space does not currently provide an important view in the Conservation Area, however it enables views from Croft Lane of the rear of the host building, which gives an appreciation of its scale and proportions. The replacement of this gap with a 3 storey wall on the boundary would result in a scale of development that would appear dominant in its surroundings.
7. The appeal property is set forward of the neighbouring building at Cedar Mews and the northern side elevation of the proposed development would appear bulky and dominant in views from the north in the High Street. This is due to the combined effect of the 3 storey side wall formed by the proposed mansard roof on the original building and the considerable depth and mass of the proposed rear extension. The appeal scheme would therefore fail to respect the scale and proportions of the host building.
8. Taking the above factors into account, I find that the proposed development would cause less than substantial harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Paragraph 196 of the Framework states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
9. The proposed development would provide a net increase of 3 dwellings, which would make a small contribution towards the housing supply in the borough. Modest economic advantages would also arise from the construction and occupation of the proposed dwellings. The appellant states that the proposed development would improve the rental yield of the building, which would enable the restaurant use on the ground floor to be viable. However, there is no evidence before me to show that the proposed development would make the restaurant use on the ground floor viable. Having regard to these factors, I find that the less than substantial harm to the significance of the Conservation Area would outweigh the modest public benefits of the proposed development.
10. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host building and the Edenbridge Conservation Area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy SP1 of the Sevenoaks District Council Core Strategy 2011, Policies EN1 and EN4 of the Sevenoaks District Council Allocations and Development Management Plan 2015 and Chapters 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which amongst other things, seeks well-designed buildings and the conservation of the historic environment.
11. I have had regard to the representations in support of the proposal, which make positive comments in respect of bringing the restaurant back into use; more footfall for the town; varied building heights; in keeping with the original

building; no loss of privacy; and, parking would not be a problem. However, these considerations would not alter my decision.

Conclusion

12. For the above reasons, and having had regard to all other matters, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Osgathorp

INSPECTOR