
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 October 2019

by Paul Jackson B Arch (Hons) RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date:

Appeal A: APP/J2210/W/19/3232361

Appeal B: APP/J2210/Y/19/3232426

The Old Rectory, Spring Lane, Fordwich, Kent CT2 0DL

- The appeals are made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission and under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (LBCA) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeals are made by Mr & Mrs Barrois against the decisions of Canterbury City Council.
 - The applications Refs 18/02594 and 18/02595, dated 28 December 2018, were refused by notices dated 24 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey side extension.
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Decisions

1. The appeals are dismissed.

Reasons

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the architectural character and historic interest of The Old Rectory, which is Grade II listed; and whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Fordwich Conservation Area (CA).
3. The Old Rectory is an unpretentious red brick 2 storey dwelling in a short narrow cul-de-sac. Its architectural and historic interest derives from amongst other things its simple double fronted composition on the edge of the highway, the amount of original fabric and an interesting catslide roof at the rear. Although listed as being 18th century, it may well originate from an earlier date. Apart from Spring Cottage opposite, it is now surrounded with 20th century development of detached and semi-detached dwellings. As such, its contribution to the character of this part of the CA as a much earlier historic building is very significant. Moreover, a public footpath passes along behind the property providing views across the village, in which the appeal property is conspicuous because of its age and character.
4. The proposed extension would be set back from the highway at the side of the listed building. However, whilst the hipped ends and weatherboarding would be subservient and complementary to the host building by virtue of appearing clearly ancillary in nature, the overall impression would be of a large challenging structure with a mixture of contemporary and traditional finishes, that would tend to diminish and distract attention from The Old Rectory. The new peg tile roof would never match the fascinating undulating character of the listed building, but by seeking to emulate it, would be visually confusing. This

would be the case even after significant weathering has occurred, especially seen from the rear. The three large dormer windows would greatly complicate the roof of the extension and seen from the front, side and rear would appear out of keeping, not helped by the high eaves, which clearly indicate a 2 storey structure. These components would significantly add to the extension's bulk, making it appear in the nature of a separate dwelling. They would compete with and diminish the ability to appreciate the unassuming host building and its long catslide. Moreover, even set back from the lane and with a hipped end, the front gable end would be prominent in the street scene. This is because it would appear 'squeezed in' between the appeal property and the boundary to the adjacent dwelling: an effect reinforced by the prominent dormers in a side view.

5. It is unclear why false timber garage doors are necessary (acknowledging that these were discussed in pre-application consultation). The design of these, between brick piers, would appear more akin to the 20th century surroundings. That would be odd and would be undesirable in the immediate setting of the listed building. The proposed facing brickwork here, as with the roof, seeks to 'match' the listed dwelling, but is more likely to appear more recent and consequently interfere with a clear 'reading' of the heritage significance of The Old Rectory.
6. The largely glazed ground floor of powder coated aluminium framed openings in an oak frame could in principle, provide a suitable contrast, allowing the listed building to be the main focus on the site. However the combination of overall bulk with roof complexity, along with finishes that would compete with the vernacular modesty of the host building, would cause harm to architectural character and historic interest. The size of the extension and the scale of the reduction in space around the property would not enhance or preserve the character and appearance of the Fordwich CA. The harm caused would be 'less than substantial' in the terms used in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), but there would be little public benefit to outweigh this.
7. In conclusion, the overall bulk and confused architectural expression, combined with cramped siting, would lessen appreciation of the heritage significance of the Old Rectory, conflicting with the heritage protection aims of policies HE1, HE4, HE5, HE6 and HE8 of the Canterbury District Local Plan of 2017 (LP): and the NPPF. There would also be a conflict with policy DBE6 of the LP, provided by the Council and referred to by the appellant.
8. I have taken into account all the other matters raised, including the rising ground behind the property, and the nearby garage/studio in Spring Lane, which is of much simpler design and in a very different location. However there is nothing that indicates other than a conclusion that for all the above reasons, the appeals should be dismissed.

Paul Jackson

INSPECTOR