



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 October 2019 by Mariam Noorgat BSc (Hons)

Decision by Andrew Owen BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/J2210/D/19/3234778

1 Windmill Close, Bridge CT4 5LY

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Ian Johnson against the decision of Canterbury City Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00758, is dated 11 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 5 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey side extension, new drop kerb and vehicular drive.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site accommodates a modest semi-detached bungalow which is situated on the corner plot of Windmill Close. The bungalow contains a front dormer however no other bungalows along Windmill Close hold this feature. Besides this, the properties along Windmill Close are all similar in design and scale and contain garages which are, in the main, setback considerably from the front elevation, giving a sense of consistency. The plots consist of spacious gardens to the front, including the appeal site. The appeal site and No.22 share a similar configuration in that their curtilage wraps around to Western Avenue with the properties set in from the boundary with Western Avenue by a similar distance, which creates a sense of balance and openness. Although there are buildings of different architectural styles and scales to the north and east of the appeal site, the modest bungalows and spacious gardens at the junction with Windmill Close are a characteristic feature of this section of Western Avenue and provides a sense of uniformity and local distinctiveness.
5. The proposed development appears to be more than half the width of the host dwelling and would be a significant proportion of additional built form compared

to the host dwelling. The proposed development is not set down at ridge level and although slightly setback from the front elevation, it is not considerable as per the general style of garages along Windmill Close. Therefore the proposed development would not be considered a subservient addition but rather an incongruous and poorly proportioned addition to the dwelling. The disproportionate scale of the proposed development is exacerbated by the continuation of the flat roof front dormer which, regardless of design, is an uncommon feature within the surrounding area, and would add to a bulky view. It is further exacerbated by the eaves height being higher than the original on the front elevation. Although this difference in height would show the proposal to be additional built form to the original, it would contrast with the existing building. As such, the proposed development would be a dominant addition which would detract from the modest scale of the host dwelling and consistency of the development in Windmill Close.

6. The siting of the proposed development on undeveloped garden, even though it is set in substantially from Western Avenue, would be closer to the northern boundary and therefore highly visible from the public highway. This would disrupt the balance it shares with No.22 and the spacious character of the immediate area. The proposal would therefore provide an incongruous view when seen in the Western Avenue street scene.
7. The appellant states the present state of the side elevation is an eyesore and that the proposed development would enhance the general appearance. I do not consider the existing side elevation to be an eyesore and nor do I find it to be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. As such, the development provides no material benefit in this respect.
8. For these reasons, I conclude the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. The proposed development therefore conflicts with Policies DBE3 and DBE6 of the Canterbury District Local Plan, adopted July 2017, which generally seeks to ensure that developments are well designed and respect the local character. These policies are echoed within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

9. Whilst I sympathise with the appellant's need for a garage for security reasons, given the appellant's past experience, I see no reason why the existing garage is impractical. I also recognise the need for more recreational space, but these personal circumstances, are not enough to outweigh the harm caused by the proposed development. The lack of objections from neighbours and the Parish Council also carries no positive weight.
10. The appellant refers to the Council giving permission to the development at 15 Green Court. That property however is distinctly different in that it is a two-storey house and the plot is less open than at the appeal site. Likewise, the properties, and the extensions to them, at other properties on Western Avenue, including on the corner of Saxon Road, are very different and not comparable to the scheme before me. Also, I do not have full details of the circumstances that led to these decisions and so cannot be sure that they represent direct parallels to the appeal proposal. In any case, I have determined the appeal on its own merits.

11. The Council do not raise any concerns with regards to the dropped kerb and driveway element of the proposal and I have no reason to disagree. However, this does not outweigh the harm identified above.

Recommendation and Conclusion

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

Mariam Noorgat

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR