



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 December 2019 by Mariam Noorgat BSc (Hons)

Decision by Andrew Owen BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/U2235/D/19/3229771

1 Tower Lane, Bearsted ME14 4JJ

- 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 and Mrs Wass against the decision of Maidstone Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/500532/FULL dated 1 February 2019 was refused by notice dated 2 April 2019.
 - The proposed development is described as a Loft extension. New dormer to the rear with new hip to gable roof structure.
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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.

Procedural matter

3. Since the time of the submission of the appeal, the Council have approved a planning application for a hip to gable roof conversion with rear dormer and rooflights to front at the appeal property. The only significant difference between the two schemes appears to be the presence of a 'flat' roofed section in the proposal before me, which is absent in the approved scheme. The focus of my considerations will therefore be this differing element.

Main Issue

4. The main issue the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site accommodates a hipped roofed chalet style bungalow with three dormers. It is located on the south side of Tower Lane, setback from the pavement and is in an established residential area where the surrounding dwellings are predominantly larger two storey properties. I mostly witnessed neat and traditionally styled, gable and hipped roofs within the surrounding area of the appeal site and found no particular style dominates the other. The

appeal property is also generally of traditional design by virtue of the window design and tiled hipped roof. The traditional elements of the appeal property provide for an appealing view from the street scene.

6. The proposed roofscape is devoid of a typical ridge one may witness on a gable roof, instead there would be a flat roof section which would be slightly slanted towards the south of the appeal site in order to accommodate a row of rooflights. This slant would provide an unconventional and incongruous view when seen from the west along Tower Lane. The resultant appearance of the roof would be a considerable deviation from the traditional elements witnessed within the existing property and surrounding area.
7. The dormer and the hip to gable elements are the same as in the approved scheme which the Council clearly consider to be acceptable. Therefore, I need not consider these aspects further.
8. Nonetheless, for the reasons given, I conclude the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. It therefore would conflict with Policies DM1 and DM9 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan, adopted 25 October 2017, (Local Plan) and the Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which all seek to protect the character and appearance of the area.

Other Matters

9. The appellant states the proposal would provide various benefits including, amongst other things, natural ventilation through the rooflights above the hallway. However this is a minor benefit and the other proposed alterations already permitted would appear to provide sufficient ventilation such that the proposal before me would be of little benefit in this regard.
10. Although there is an element of screening provided by the vegetation to the north east of the appeal property, I cannot attach significant weight to this due to its non-permanent nature. Notwithstanding this, clear views are available from the west and north of the appeal site.
11. Whilst there is adherence to some parts of the SPD and Policy DM1 of the Local Plan, when viewed holistically, I find a clear conflict with these documents as outlined 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