



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 January 2020

by Neil Smith BA Hons BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3820/D/19/3241429

Oak Cottages, Ilfield Green, Crawley, West Sussex RH11 0NW

- 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 David Copas against the decision of Crawley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref CR/2019/0565/FUL, dated 29 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 10 October 2019.
 - The development proposed is dormers (2 No.) to main roof at rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the appeal proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Ifield Village Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

3. The appeal site accommodates a two-storey brick-built dwelling with a tiled roof. The dwelling is set back from the road with a hard standing and has a long rear garden area. There are a range of dwelling types along the street including terraced, semi-detached and detached properties. There are also a number of commercial occupiers on the ground floors of nearby buildings.
4. The appeal property is in the Ifield Village CA, a designated heritage asset. The unique character of the CA is a small, scattered rural settlement. The form of low-density, traditionally designed late Victorian and Edwardian period dwellings are typical of an English village, which contribute to its overall character. The appeal property displays these characteristics and makes a positive contribution to the CA as it forms part of the established and historic pattern of development.
5. The appeal proposal comprises three elements: a rear dormer window to the main roof slope with a single rear facing window; two velux roof lights to the front roof plane; a dormer window, which would be on the two-storey rear addition and a single, side facing window with obscured glazing. Together they would form an 'L' shaped dormer and would provide an additional bedroom and bathroom. The Council did not oppose the two velux roof lights and from the evidence before me, I have no reason to reach a different conclusion.
6. The dormer on the main rear roof would be set in from the main side wall of the house, set slightly back from the main rear wall and would be below the

main ridge line. It would occupy a large part of the roof plane. The dormer above the rear extension would be constructed to virtually the same height as the ridge line with limited set ins from the side and rear walls. Similar to the rear dormer, it would also occupy a large part of the side roof plane. Taken together, the appeal proposal would be a bulky and incongruous addition to the roof resulting in an unacceptable unbalancing effect to it.

7. The appellant states that the proposal would be well screened and not highly visible, however the development would be visible from the rear gardens of neighbouring properties and there would also be glimpses visible from the street. The appellant has drawn my attention to a number of other dormer windows and extensions in the vicinity and I saw from my site visit the dormer window to the rear of 2 Alma Cottages. However, I do not have the full planning histories of these schemes and I cannot be certain of any direct comparison with the appeal proposal.
8. The appellant has also provided an appeal decision at the neighbouring property, No 2 Strathmore Road. However, it differs from the appeal scheme as it was for a two-storey side extension. I acknowledge that the development would be constructed in materials that match the existing dwelling, but this does not either alter or outweigh the harm identified. I am also mindful that no representations have been made in respect of the proposal, however the lack of third-party objections does not comprise a benefit in favour of the proposed development.
9. The Council has produced an Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document (October 2016). It states that dormer windows should be kept well below the ridge line, smaller than the overall width of the roof and away from the edges. It also recommends that dormer windows should be centred on the window lines below and that dormers take up no more than half the width of the dwelling.
10. The appeal proposal, by reason of its form, size and bulk would result in an obtrusive and incompatible form of development, poorly related to and at odds with the established and historic pattern of development. The statutory duty in Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is a matter of considerable importance and weight. The development would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the CA. This weighs considerably against the proposal.
11. The proposal would have a detrimental effect on the significance of a designated heritage asset and would result in 'less than substantial' harm under paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).
12. The Framework requires such harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The proposal is for two roof dormers, which would provide a very modest contribution to the housing stock. The public benefits would not outweigh the less than substantial harm.
13. Consequently, the proposal conflicts with Policies CH2, CH3, CH12 and CH13 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan, the advice contained within the Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document (2016), the Ifield Village Conservation Area Statement (2018), which require, amongst other things, development in a CA

to result in the preservation or enhancement of the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusions

14. For the reasons given above the appeal is dismissed.

Neil Smith

INSPECTOR