



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 September 2020

by C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27th November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Z2260/W/20/3248601

1 Reculver Avenue, Birchington CT7 9NT

- 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 Nicholas against the decision of Thanet District Council.
 - The application Ref FH/TH/19/1612, dated 25 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 30 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as minor two-storey and single-storey extensions on west elevation, minor single-storey extension on south and east elevations. External alterations on east elevation to upgrade existing single storey extension and to alter main roof, new garage in place of existing carport.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of single storey and two storey extension to rear elevation, single storey extensions to front and side elevations, roof extension and erection of garage following demolition of existing car port at 1 Reculver Avenue, Birchington CT7 9NT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: FH/TH/19/1612, dated 25 November 2019, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: IMA 115 PL 05A, IMA 115 PL 06, IMA 115 PL 07A, IMA 115 PL 08B, IMA 115 PL 10
 - 3) The external finishes of the development hereby permitted shall match in material and colour those of the existing dwelling.

Preliminary Matters

2. Since the application was determined, the Council has adopted the Thanet Local Plan July 2020 (LP). This replaces the previous Local Plan and the policies cited in the Council's refusal notice no longer apply. The main parties have been consulted on the matter and I am satisfied that no prejudice would arise by the consideration of the appeal proposal against the policies of the now adopted LP.
3. I have used the proposal's description as set out in the Council's decision notice as this better focusses on the development involved.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the property and surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The host property is a detached, two-storey dwelling in a residential area on the outskirts of Birchington-on-Sea. It is situated on a corner plot at the junction of Reculver Avenue and Minnis Road. The elevation fronting Reculver Avenue in particular is eclectic in appearance, with an assortment of disjointed additions and roof styles at ground and first floor level. Further afield there is no prevailing architectural style in the area, and in design terms the neighbourhood is characterised by dwellings of substantial variety with regard to age, size, appearance and detailing.
6. The Council's concerns appear to relate solely to the Reculver Avenue elevation. The current hotchpotch of elements would be replaced with, amongst other things, a single mono-pitch roof extension. This would have high level windows along the length of the external wall, skylights within the mono-pitch roof and the external surface of the extension would be finished with white render.
7. In my view, the scheme would regularise the appearance of the dwelling when viewed from Reculver Avenue. I accept that there is no boundary wall and that the development would abut the public footway, but this is already the case along the majority of the property's length. The high-level windows would be an appropriate solution to provide privacy to the occupants of the dwelling. The property would be accessed from Reculver Avenue via steps to the porch and front door, so an element of active frontage would be retained. The use of white render is evident on other buildings in the vicinity and so would not appear incongruous.
8. With these factors in mind, I consider that there would be no demonstrable harm as a result of the scheme. The extension would create balance and a sense of uniformity that would not detract from the visual amenity of the host property or the streetscene.
9. I note that the Council neither objects to the other elements of the proposal with regard to the character and appearance of the dwelling and surrounding area, nor to the living conditions of the occupants of neighbouring dwellings and highway safety. I have no reason to disagree.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling and the surrounding area. Consequently it would comply with the requirements of policy QD02 of the LP that seeks to ensure proposals relate to surrounding development, are well-designed and respect and enhance the character of an area. It would also be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

Conditions

11. I have considered the imposition of conditions in light of advice in Planning Policy Guidance and the Framework. In addition to the standard implementation condition, the approved plans are listed for certainty. To

ensure a satisfactory appearance I impose a condition requiring the use of matching materials.

Conclusion

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

C Hall

INSPECTOR