

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 December 2020

by Simon Warder MA BSc(Hons) DipUD(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Z2260/D/20/3263398

56 King Edward Avenue, Broadstairs, CT10 1PH

- 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 Matt Westby against the decision of Thanet District Council.
 - The application Ref FH/TH/20/1016, dated 31 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 11 November 2020.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion with front, rear and side dormers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The appellant has referred to a revision D of application plan number A172/01/01. For the avoidance of doubt, my decision is based on revision C of the plan, which was the version used by the Council to determine the application.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two storey semi-detached dwelling which is typical of the properties in King Edward Avenue. Projecting front gables and centrally positioned front doors under a porch spanning both properties give the pair a pleasing symmetry when viewed from the road. This symmetry has been slightly undermined by the addition of a flat roof dormer in the front roof slope of the other property. However, the dormer is fairly modest in size, understated in its appearance and proportions and set back in the roof slope.
 5. The appeal proposal includes three dormers. The dormer in the front roof slope would have a double door and 'Juliet' balcony under a pitched roof. It would, therefore, have a disproportionate vertical emphasis and would be set close to the lower edge of the roof slope. As such, it would be unduly assertive, dominating the front roof slope and significantly unbalancing the symmetry of the pair of dwellings. As a consequence, the dormer would also be a prominent and jarring presence in the street scene.
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6. The appellant has drawn my attention to a number of other front dormers in King Edward Avenue and Pierremont Avenue. For the most part, these are less assertive than the proposed front dormer. Whilst a couple are of comparable scale, they do little to complement the street scene and do not provide a robust justification for the appeal proposal. Moreover, the examples cited are spread over a fairly wide area and, even taken collectively, are not characteristic of the area. Therefore, I consider that they do not set a precedent for the appeal proposal.
7. I agree with the Council that the dormers proposed to the side and rear of the property would be less obtrusive in their siting and appearance. Therefore, they do not add to the harm caused by the front dormer. Nevertheless, overall, I find that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area.
8. As such, the proposal would conflict with Policy QD02 of the Thanet Local Plan 2020. It requires development to provide high quality design that respects and enhances the character of the area and pays particular attention to context and to the scale and massing appropriate to the locality. Nor would the proposal accord with Policy BSP9 of the Broadstairs and St Peter's Neighbourhood Plan which encourages proposals that conserve and enhance the local character and sense of identity of the Plan area or with paragraphs 127 or 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework to the extent that they have similar aims.

Other Matters

9. The appellant contends that the proposal would provide accommodation of a type that meets an identified need in Thanet. However, the appellant's evidence suggests that the need is mainly for three bedroom accommodation. The appeal proposal would change the property from three to four bedrooms. As such, it would become less suited to meeting the identified need.
10. I accept that the proposal may allow sea views to be obtained from the property. Nevertheless, I consider that this would be a personal benefit to the occupiers rather than something which contributes to general health and well-being. Accordingly, I can give it little weight.

Conclusion

11. The very limited benefits of the proposal do not amount to material considerations that indicate that the appeal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. Consequently, the identified conflict with the development plan means that the proposal does not benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The appeal should be dismissed.

Simon Warder

INSPECTOR