



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 December 2020 by Thomas Courtney BA(Hons) MA

Decision by Zoe Raygen Dip URP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/G2245/D/20/3257838

Ingledene, Church Road, Crockenhill BR8 8JY

- 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 Miss Emma Strong against the decision of Sevenoaks District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/01336/HOUSE, dated 14 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 15 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is a front and side ground floor extension with associated loft and roof works.
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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 host dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site accommodates a bungalow known as 'Ingledene' and a detached games room within the rear garden. It is a narrow rectangular plot located on the western side of Church Road which is characterised by a mix of two-storey detached dwellings, bungalows and terraced housing. The property is set-back from the road and sits within a small cluster of three detached bungalows of a similar height and design.
 5. Although I note that the ridge height of the proposed front dormers would indeed be lower than the height of the existing roof, and they would align with the window pattern below, they would nevertheless be set above the proposed main roof line resulting in an odd and disjointed appearance. They would also, even when compared to those existing on the dwelling, appear weighty and would visually dominate the roof plane and thus fail to appear subordinate to the rest of the dwelling. The front dormers would therefore stray from the prevailing surrounding architectural context and would not resemble the dormers referred to in photographs within the appellant's statement which show nearby properties within Crockenhill.
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6. Furthermore, I also find that the width of the rear dormer would be disproportionately sized and would serve to unbalance the rear aspect of the dwelling. The detached games room within the rear garden would offer some screening to the development, as would the vegetation bordering the site, however the rear aspect would still be visible to surrounding residents.
7. Whilst the appellant asserts that the roof shape would be appropriate and would not impact the street frontage, the considerable scale of the proposed flat crown-roof elements would be inappropriately excessive. It would thus appear awkward and would unbalance the appearance and form of the property as a whole and would noticeably diverge from the architectural form of the neighbouring bungalows immediately to the south. Although it would remain set-back from Church Road, it would nonetheless be readily visible within the street scene and to surrounding properties to the north and east and would consequently have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
8. I note the reference to the property at 1 Barnfield Close which gained permission for an increase in ridge height, a front and side extension, four front dormers, and a large 13m wide dormer to the rear roof plane. The appellant highlights that, in that case, the Council considered that the inclusion of the new dormers would interrupt the visual bulk of the roof and that the remodelling of the roof would not harm the character and appearance of the street due to the non-uniformity of the architectural styles within the street. The appellant states that it therefore follows that the proposed scheme at Ingledene is similarly appropriate. However, in my view, 1 Barnfield Close is architecturally coherent and does not feature dormers projecting over the ridge height of the main roof or an unreasonable amount of flat roof. I also find that the rear dormer is proportionate to the size of the roof. It sits within a larger triangular plot and does not appear as prominently within the street scene. Therefore, this other case does not alter my decision which has been reached on the individual merits of this case.
9. I therefore find the proposed development would result in a bulky and architecturally discordant feature which would jar with the prevailing surrounding pattern of development. It would appear over-dominant in light of its excessive proportions and awkward design and would thus harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.
10. Given the above, the proposed development would therefore conflict with Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy, Policy EN1 of the Allocations and Development Management Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework, as well as guidance contained within the Sevenoaks Council Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document which together aim to ensure that proposals are well-designed and respect the character of the surrounding area.

Recommendation

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

Thomas Courtney

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

Zoe Raygen

INSPECTOR