
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 June 2021

by Nicola Davies BA DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Z2260/D/21/3270028

53 Sandhurst Road, Margate CT9 3JQ

- 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 R Bradford against the decision of Thanet District Council.
 - The application Ref FH/TH/21/0026, dated 7 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 17 February 2021.
 - The development proposed is single storey extension to front of dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. Sandhurst Road comprises two-storey dwellings and bungalows made up of a mix of form and sizes albeit some with a uniformity of design. Those dwellings of matching design are generally grouped together along the street. Number 53 forms part of a collection of bungalows that host a common frontage set-back to their design. The properties along this part of Sandhurst Road have maintained their set-backs, therefore, the street scene retains a visual continuity in respect of the design of the bungalows and the appearance of the area. This regularity creates a street scene of distinctive appearance that has a strong sense of place.
4. I acknowledge that the property has been converted from a single dwelling to two and that it has been extended at one side. Unlike the neighbouring properties, being handed the appeal property presents a cut-out recess rather than a projecting gable when approaching the site from Eastchurch Road. Nonetheless, the property retains its frontage set-back that is a common design feature of this collection of matching properties.
5. The proposal to infill the set-back would be out of keeping with the existing bungalows along Sandhurst Road and would not reinforce the local character as the rhythm to the pattern and appearance of the street scene would be diminished. Consequently, the proposed extension would be visually harmful. This would be so despite the property being located adjacent to a footpath and at a bend in the highway, and having a forward siting compared to other

properties. The harm would be clearly visible in public views from Sandhurst Road and particularly when travelling from the west where number 53 is clearly visible on the outside of the bend in the highway.

6. The extension itself would be of relatively small scale, be set behind the front building line and be constructed of materials that would match that of the host property and others in the area. However, these matters would not outweigh the harm that I have identified by infilling the existing frontage recess. Retaining the existing palm tree and erecting a side fence would screen the development to some extent. Nonetheless, unacceptable development is not made acceptable simply because it can be partially hidden.
7. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would, therefore, conflict with Policy QD02 of the Thanet District Council Local Plan March 2020 and paragraphs 127 and 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework. That policy and the Framework seek, amongst other matters, development to promote and reinforce the local character of the area and to relate to the surrounding development paying particular attention to the context and identity of its location and rhythm.

Other matters

8. Some concern has been raised about the processing of the planning application with regard to the lack of proactive discussion between parties during the course of the Council's consideration of the application. However, this is not a matter that is primarily before me in respect of this appeal but is an issue for the local planning authority in the first instance.
9. Although no objection has been raised by local occupiers there is a need to consider the proposal in terms of the wider public interest.

Conclusion

10. Having regard to the above findings, the appeal should be dismissed.

Nicola Davies

INSPECTOR