



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 November 2021

by Michael Evans BA MA MPhil DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/G2245/D/21/3278878

Canterbury Cottage, 131 Pilgrims Way, Kemsing TN15 6TE

- 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 G Mesher against the decision of Sevenoaks District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01171/HOUSE, dated 15 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 16 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing garage and store, construction of two storey side extension and single storey rear extension and formation of two dormer windows to the front.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect on the streetscene.

Reasons

3. The appeal concerns a detached dwelling with a catslide roof at first floor level at the front and two full storeys at the rear. Dwellings in the vicinity in the street tend to be detached and vary in relation to matters such as their height and roof form. Nevertheless, the proposed side extension would rise above the ridge of the main roof and project forward of the front wall of the existing dwelling. It would also be a relatively deep addition. This would be reflected in the fairly noticeable length of its ridge line, which would be apparent from the street. The Appellant suggests that the height of the flank extension above the existing roof would only be minor. I do not accept this with the Appellant indicating that this dimension would be 1.43m, resulting in a fairly obvious and eye-catching difference.
4. In the vicinity of the appeal site on this side of Pilgrims Way, the above factors would result in the side extension appearing as a relatively unusual and incongruous feature at odds with the adjacent built form. Moreover, rather than resulting in an attractive development of good design, the side extension would constitute an unduly bulky, disproportionate, unsympathetic and prominent addition. This adverse impact would be readily appreciated from the street in Pilgrims Way despite the property being set back about 14m from the highway. I note that the distance the side extension would project beyond the existing dwelling at the front would be 2.7m and not 3.7m but this does not alter my view.

5. Even though the host dwelling is one of the smaller properties in the vicinity and if the enlarged property would be no higher than the dwelling at no. 129 Pilgrims Way, for the above reasons it is concluded that the side extension would unacceptably detract from the streetscene.
6. The Appellant has provided details concerning other nearby dwellings where the Council has granted planning permission. However, none of these have resulted in a two storey front gable projection rising above the top of the main roof, as would occur in this case. They are not therefore comparable with the current scheme and lend no meaningful support to the appeal.
7. Allocations and Development Management Plan (2015) Policy EN1 intends that proposals should create a high quality of design. It also seeks compliance with a number of criteria but this is in addition to this and not instead of it. Therefore, even if the proposal complies with all the criteria, the failure to attain a high quality of design in this instance means that the scheme would be contrary to the development plan.
8. There would also be conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) where it is indicated that decisions should ensure that developments add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.
9. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), Residential Extensions (2009), indicates that a side extension should not dominate the original building. It is suggested that this can be helped by reducing the bulk of the extension and setting it back from the front elevation and introducing a lower roof on the extension. Although it was adopted just over 12 years ago, these are sound principles and I consider that the SPD should be afforded some weight in this appeal. In any event, for the reasons given above the scheme would conflict with the development plan and Framework anyway.
10. In this case the larger family dwelling, with space for later alterations in the loft, would be achieved at the undue expense of the quality of the built environment. I note the objections of neighbours, including in relation to matters such as loss of light and privacy. For reasons such as the distance from the two storey addition and its degree of rearward projection being insufficient to cause harm, I see no reason to take a different view from the Council that the concerns of neighbours in these respects are not justified.
11. Despite acceptability in this regard and taking account of all other matters raised, because of the harm that I have found it is determined that the appeal fails.

M Evans

INSPECTOR