



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 December 2021

by David Smith BA(Hons) DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6th December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/X2220/D/21/3276627

52 Guilton, Ash, CT3 2HP

- 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 Robert Maxted against the decision of Dover District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00162, dated 31 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 28 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is installation of cladding to 50% of front elevation of property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. Black cement boarding with a wood effect finish has been applied at first floor level to the appeal property. The main issue is whether this cladding preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Guilton, Ash Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The Guilton, Ash Conservation Area comprises an attractive cluster of historic buildings on the edge of the village. The appeal property is part of a terrace of four nineteenth century cottages which, other than the proposed cladding, are rendered. In their modest way, these buildings contribute to the overall sense of place because they fit in well with the prevailing building types. A key feature is their consistency of design and finish.
4. Representations from local residents provide further detail and indicate that the properties were originally called De Burgh Terrace and built by the Ralph family to house the employees of their threshing machine business in Guilton. Furthermore, it is said that photographic records show that the terrace's front elevations have been plastered and rendered throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.
5. The cladding provides a stark and discordant contrast with the remainder of the terrace. It detracts substantially from its otherwise generally homogenous appearance and so harms the significance of the heritage asset. There is black boarding nearby at Rowan Lodge and The Willows. However, this has been used in a different context to give the impression of vernacular agricultural buildings at the former School Farm site. As such, this does not justify the proposal which is alien and which spoils the uniformity of the row.

6. It is suggested that the colour of the boarding could be the subject of a condition. Whilst painting it white would assist in blending the cladding with the other houses in the terrace, it would not achieve the smooth exterior that is typical of them. Therefore, this would not overcome the harm identified.
7. The appellant explains that the original sand and cement render had become defective and had 'blown' from the brickwork, enabling water to ingress the property. As part of the general refurbishment of the building this was clearly a matter that needed to be dealt with. However, it is not clear why the situation could not have been remedied by treating, replastering and rendering so that the property would remain in keeping with its immediate neighbours.
8. In the words of the National Planning Policy Framework the proposal leads to less than substantial harm. Nevertheless, great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets. The repair of the front wall to enable the house to be occupied can be treated as a public benefit for the purposes of paragraph 202. However, this does not outweigh the harm that has occurred to the conservation area due to these incongruous works.

Conclusion

9. The proposal fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Gilton, Ash Conservation Area and there are no other considerations to override that finding. Therefore, for the reasons given, the appeal fails.

David Smith

INSPECTOR