



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 November 2021

by J E Jolly BA (Hons) MA MSc CIH MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9th December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/M2270/D/21/3276250

Roadways, Foxhole Lane, Matfield TN12 7EP

- 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 David Cummins against the decision of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00939/FULL, dated 10 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 18 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is for a two-storey extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The *National Planning Policy Framework* (the Framework) represents the Government's up-to-date planning policies for England and how they should be applied. The Government published a revised Framework on 20 July 2021 and is a material consideration for development proposals. I note however, in this case, that the main parties have made no further comments in respect of these changes.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling.

Reasons

4. The appeal dwelling of 'Roadways' is a two-storey detached dwelling that is set back from Foxhole Lane which is a single track lane that leads to the junction of Chestnut Lane near to the settlement of Matfield. The surrounding area is predominantly typified by traditional loose-knit development of varied styles and types facing the road. The host dwelling is characterised by 'eyebrow' windows, a thatched cat-slide roof, a shed dormer and white painted brick walls.
5. I noticed at my site visit that a chimney stack to the rear of the dwelling as shown on drawing: DC1 - 'site survey as existing' is no longer standing. Nevertheless, the proposal is to construct a two-storey extension to the side and rear of the host dwelling. The development would have a slate roof and white rendered elevations.

Character and appearance

6. The appellant has brought to my attention that there have been alterations to the nearby dwelling of 'Pippins'. However, I have limited details of that scheme before me and cannot be certain whether it was considered under the same development plan as the proposed development or not. Therefore, as is correct, I have considered the proposal at 'Roadways' on its own planning merits.
7. As such, the extent of the development would be modest and set down from the main ridge of the host dwelling, the majority of which would only be glimpsed from Foxhole Lane. Moreover, I acknowledge that contemporary type designs and materials can sometimes blend successfully with older style dwellings, pastiche or otherwise. However, this is not the case here. Whether the host property is different in appearance to other properties in the area or not, the proposal would be detrimentally and substantially at odds with the eye-catching host property. Indeed, the proposal would have stark gable ends, and a pitched slate roof that would jar with the softer lines of the existing thatched roofed dwelling and the attractive cat-slide roof. Furthermore, the proposal would have an awkward mis-match of fenestration without the distinctive 'eyebrow' detail of the host property and include a highly prominent dormer that would be far removed from a traditional 'Kentish' type design.
8. In addition, even if slate tiles were a feature of the host dwelling in accordance with more recent dwellings following the coming of the railways as the appellant contends, I concur with the Council's Conservation & Urban Design Officer who has brought to my attention that clay tiles are more typical in the immediate surrounding area.
9. I conclude therefore, that the design form and materials of the proposal would be incongruous with the host property and hence harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling.
10. Consequently, the proposal is contrary to Policies H11, LBD1, EN1 and EN25 of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2006, Core Policies 4 and 5 of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Development Core Strategy 2010, as supported by the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Development Framework, Alterations & Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2006, and Section 1 of the Kent Design Guide.
11. For similar reasons, the proposal does not meet the aims of Paragraph 130 (c) of the Framework which requires that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

Conclusions

12. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J E JOLLY

INSPECTOR