



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 January 2022

by Cullum J A Parker BA(Hons) MA MRTPI MCMI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13TH January 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/E2205/D/21/3287042

2 Subdown Cottages, The Street, Brabourne, TN25 5LT

- 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 James Homewood against the decision of Ashford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01176/AS, dated 23 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 24 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as '*proposed two storey extension*'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for proposed two storey extension at 2 Subdown Cottage, The Street, Brabourne, TN25 5LT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/01176/AS, dated 23 June 2021, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 21043.02 Existing and 21043.03 Proposed.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the street scene; including whether it would preserve or enhance that of the Brabourne Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal building, 2 Subdown Cottage, is a two-storey semi-detached house with clay-tiled hipped roof with a catslide element to the front. The site lies within the Brabourne Conservation Area. The character of this part of the Conservation Area derives from a short row of 6 semi-detached dwellings in the style of the appeal building, bookended by two storey buildings of differing styles. In particular, Nos 3 and 4 Subdown Cottages (contained within this trio) have two storey side extensions similar to that sought in this instance.

4. The Council is concerned that the addition proposed in this case to No2 would create an uneven visual balance between it and the adjoining No1 Subdown. I acknowledge that the proposal would diminish some of the symmetry with No 1 in pure visual terms. That is the very nature of placing an extension on one side of a pair of semi-detached houses. Whilst the buildings are pleasant enough, they are not architecturally notable and further extension as proposed in this case would not detract from the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Furthermore, the fact remains that the proposal would restore some symmetry with Nos 3 and 4 as viewed from the highway.
5. As the Council suggests, typically side extensions are set down and back from the main dwelling so as to create a degree of subservience. However, were this used in this case the proposal would introduce a visibly odd feature into the street scene which would detract from its character and appearance. Instead, the proposed design seeks to continue the form, sizing and massing of the established built form within the street scene. For example, key architectural features to this trio of dwellings would remain – such as chimney and cat slide style roof forms as shown on the submitted drawings.
6. With the use of matching materials and similar design, I find that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the Brabourne Conservation Area and the street scene more generally. Accordingly, the proposal would accord with Policies HOU8, ENV3b, and ENV14 of the Ashford Local Plan 2030 (Adopted February 2019) (ALP), which, amongst other aims, seek to ensure that proposals preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas.
7. My attention has been drawn to Policy ENV3b of the ALP, which refers to the Landscape character and Design in the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Officer's report indicates that the appeal site is adjacent to the AONB but does not provide any detailed analysis of why or how the proposal may affect the setting of the AONB. Given my considerations above, I do not consider that the proposal would affect the setting of the AONB which lies outside of the appeal site. Furthermore, the appeal site is located within a short ribbon of developed area within Brabourne and I have found the location and form proposed acceptable. The proposal does not conflict with the development plan policy.

Conditions

8. Conditions requiring the development to be started within three years of permission, and that it be carried out in accordance with the submitted drawings and using matching materials, are reasonable and necessary to provide certainty and protect the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

9. The proposed development accords with the adopted development plan and there are no material considerations that indicate a decision otherwise than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed subject to conditions.

C Parker

INSPECTOR