



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 January 2022

by C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 FEBRUARY 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/L2250/D/21/3281937

Gardenleigh, Coast Drive, St Mary's Bay, Romney Marsh TN29 0HN

- 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 Ms Jacolyn Tankaria against the decision of Folkestone & Hythe District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/1590/FH, dated 24 July 2021, was refused by notice dated 27 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is for the conversion of existing garage with extension above and an extension to side and installation of photovoltaic solar panels to roof SE.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development having regard to the character of the dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Gardenleigh is a two-storey, detached house occupying a backland setting in a residential area to the east side of Coast Drive. A public footpath runs to the side of the property between Dymchurch Road and the seafront.
 4. It would be clearly evident from the public footpath that the ridge height of the two-storey side extension would continue the ridge line of the existing property and the front elevation would be flush with the host dwelling.
 5. Being flush with the front elevation and the ridge line, the addition would lack subservience. The imposing appearance of the extension would result in the creation of a long, unbroken expanse of first floor development and roof form, which would be in contrast to the existing dwelling, and compete with its overall scale. It would represent an obtrusive addition to the detriment of the character of the building.
 6. The solar panels would be positioned within the south-facing roofslope, and would assist with electricity generation, reducing the reliance of the property on fossil fuels. However, given my findings on the general character of the dwelling and the surrounding area outlined above, I am inclined to adopt a precautionary approach to this issue. The solar array would serve to accentuate the utilitarian appearance of the house, with no articulation at roof level. This would be deleterious to the character of the building and the surrounds, and any sustainability benefits would not outweigh the harm that would arise.
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7. The appellant states that the boot room and first floor equivalent could be removed from the proposal, however I have no plans before me to demonstrate this. Moreover, I am not persuaded that such an alteration would resolve the lack of subservience concerns I have reasoned previously.
8. I acknowledge those other matters that have been advanced in support of the development, including the assertion that the addition would result in improvements to the layout of the dwelling to meet living requirements and that there have been no objections to the scheme from local residents or the Parish Council. Nonetheless, these matters do not outweigh the harm I have identified above.
9. I also recognise the presence of other development in the neighbourhood. However, local flats and additions to other houses would be neutral considerations in any balance against planning harm, and in any event each case must be assessed on its own merits.
10. I conclude that the scheme would result in harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling and the surrounding area. It would be conflict with Policies HB1 and HB8 of the Folkestone & Hythe Places and Policies Local Plan (September 2020), which seek to secure new development of acceptable scale and appearance.

Conclusion

11. Based on my reasoning above, the appeal fails.

C Hall

INSPECTOR