
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 February 2022

by D M Young JP BSc (Hons) MPlan MRTPI MIHE

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/J2210/W/21/3277960
103 Cromwell Road, Whitstable CT5 1NL

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ms Hannah Hawksworth against Canterbury City Council.
 - The application Ref CA//21/00518, is dated 2 March 2021.
 - The development proposed is a domestic single and double storey extension with rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The appeal is made against the failure of the Council to determine the application within the prescribed period. Following the submission of the appeal, the Council provided a statement outlining their concerns in relation to the proposal. The Council has confirmed that had it been in a position to determine the application, it would have been refused for reasons relating to its effect on the Whitstable Town Conservation Area (WTCA).

Main Issue

3. In light of the above, the main issue is whether the development would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the WTCA.

Reasons

4. The host property is a traditional two-storey, semi-detached dwelling located at the corner of Cromwell Road and Regent Street. Like the existing rear projection, the proposed extension would be built right up to the highway edge thus extending the property rearwards towards 135 Regent Street.
5. Whilst I acknowledge the footprint of the extension would largely replicate that of the existing single storey extension, its excessive height and bulk would draw attention to itself in a manner that the existing extension does not. Accordingly, it would be an oppressively bulky and prominent feature in the Regent Street street-scene extending beyond the rear extension to 101 Cromwell Road. To that end, it would cause harm to the settlement pattern of the WTCA.
6. I accept that the use of matching brickwork (as opposed to the unsympathetic rendering used at No 101) would help to assimilate the extension into the

street scene. I also accept that any concealment of the large, unsightly rear extension to the neighbouring property must also be a benefit. However, on balance, these matters do not outweigh the visual harm I have identified.

7. I also share the Council's concerns regarding the rear dormer window. This large, box-like structure would dominate the rear roof-slope and would be markedly different to the more modest dormers windows I observed on my site visit. Again, the rear dormer would be especially prominent in views from the north.
8. While I accept there is scope to extend the host building to provide the additional living space sought, in this case the Appellant is simply expecting too much from a site with notable constraints.
9. The harm identified above would amount to "less than substantial harm" which the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises must be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme. Whilst the scheme would provide additional living accommodation, heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and the Framework is clear that in considering the impact of development on the significance of heritage assets, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Consequently, I conclude that these largely private benefits would be insufficient to outweigh the harm to the WTCA.
10. Based on the foregoing, I conclude that the proposal would conflict with Policies DBE3, DBE6, HE1 and HE6 of the Canterbury District Local Plan 2017. Amongst other things, these seek high quality design which has regard to the character of the original building in terms of design, size, bulk and height as well as proposals which preserve the special architectural or historic character and appearance of conservation areas.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above and taking into account of all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

D. M. Young

Inspector