

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 March 2022

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/B1415/D/22/3291458

45 Gleneagles Drive, St Leonards-on-sea, TN38 0HU

- 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 English against the decision of Hastings Borough Council.
 - The application Ref HS/FA/21/00978, dated 20 October 2021, was refused by notice dated 13 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is a single storey rear extension and first floor extension over garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The two-storey detached appeal property has a single storey garage to the side which runs to the boundary beyond which is a neighbouring side pathway and then a two-storey flank wall. The dwelling is the central one of three effectively identical homes which are staggered vertically and horizontally relative to each other but read as a harmonious line of properties. Most others on this housing estate follow a similar development pattern and design. The locality is of attractive established residential character and the dwellings, gardens, spacing, rhythm and architecture all contribute to a pleasing appearance. The proposal is as described above.
 4. I found this run of three homes, and indeed many others locally, to be well-designed properties in a cohesive layout and to my eye a key to this here is the separation which prevails at upper level. It provides a sense of spaciousness to front and side elevations and an open vista through as well as tree glimpses. Regrettably the appeal scheme would be jarring on the eye and lead to the loss of a distinctive sense of spaciousness prevailing on this stretch of homes. Even with the planned set back and stepping of height it would not be suitably subservient to the host property and would intrude in the streetscene by largely closing a gap at upper level. The modest pathway-type spacing at
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ground level would simply not be sufficient at first floor and roof heights. I have to conclude that in this particular case, with this proposal, in this stretch of homes, that character and appearance would not be suitably preserved.

5. Policy DM1 of the Hastings Development Management Plan 2015 and Policy SC1 (i) of the Hastings Planning Strategy 2014 are relevant. Taken together and amongst other matters, they call for protection of local character and distinctiveness with design being sympathetic to a site and its context. In all the circumstances I conclude that the proposal would conflict with these pertinent development plan policies.

Other matters

6. I do sympathise with the Appellant's wish to extend this dwelling. I noted the variety of development form in the wider area and I have considered other extension works drawn to my attention. None of the alterations exactly mirror the case in hand by reason of design, scale, location or immediate context and, in any event, I do have to assess this scheme on its own merits. I appreciate that the Appellant would be flexible on architectural finesse and materials but it is the bulk and positioning which is of concern to me. I can also see that changes have been made from a previous scheme in an attempt to overcome the Council's concerns; albeit these have not gone far enough in the Council's and my opinion. I agree with the Appellant, and the Council, that the scheme would not unduly impinge upon residential amenity for neighbours.
7. I have carefully considered all the points raised by the Appellant but these matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to the main issue identified above.
8. I confirm that policies in the National Planning Policy Framework have been considered and the development plan policies which I cite mirror relevant objectives within that document.

Overall conclusion

9. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR