

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/U1430/D/21/3284672
110 Hastings Road, Battle, TN33 0TQ

- 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 & Mrs S Hastings against the decision of Rother Borough Council.
 - The application Ref RR/2021/858/P, dated 9 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 26 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is the change of external materials to dwelling and garage to Grey Cedral weatherboard at upper levels. New rendered frontage wall and gates for privacy and security.
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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 appeal site comprises a two-storey detached dwellinghouse with a forward-sited detached garage, on the south-west side of Hastings Road. The site is in an area of ribbon development in countryside beyond the settlement boundary and the surroundings are characterised by a variety of detached dwellings with large gardens. This stretch of road has largely unremarkable dwellings which generally sit back giving a low-key character and an innocuous and at times pleasing appearance. The site lies within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The proposal is as described above.
 4. The existing elevations to the house, which lies beyond a sizeable front garden, consist of white render at ground floor and clay coloured tile-hanging at the upper levels. The existing garage, which effectively abuts the road, is finished in white render with clay tiles. The planned alterations to the house and garage include the replacement of the existing tile hanging with Grey Cedral weatherboarding.
 5. It is notable that the vast majority of properties in the surrounding locality are finished in traditional materials including brick, render and clay coloured tile
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hanging and this leads to a comfortable scene at this transition between town and visually open countryside. Regrettably grey weatherboarding would not sit subtly in this AONB context and would lead to a built form on this site which would draw undue visual attention and simply not appear as a suitable part of the aesthetic of the area. The appeal scheme would be jarring on the eye as the house and garage would become patently out of place given the use of uncharacteristic cladding of a stark modern idiom. I have to conclude in this particular case, with this proposal, in this stretch of homes, that character and appearance would not be suitably preserved.

6. Policies OSS4, RA3, EN1 and EN3 of the Rother Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) Plan 2015 and Policies DHG9 and DEN2 of the Development and Site Allocations Local Plan (2019) are relevant. Taken together and amongst other matters, they call for protection of local character and distinctiveness with design and materials being sympathetic to a site as well as its context along with the conservation and enhancement of landscape and scenic beauty within the AONB. In all the circumstances I conclude that the proposal would conflict with these pertinent development plan policies.

Other matters

7. I recognise the Appellants' wish to update this dwelling and that grey cladding is popular at the present time, although subjectively I would not concur that the existing tile hanging is bland. I noted the variety of development form in the wider area and I have considered other cladding instances drawn to my attention and the decisions thereon by both the Council and the Inspectorate. However, none of the works exactly mirror the case in hand by reason of design, location or immediate context and, in any event, I do have to assess this scheme on its own merits. 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