



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 March 2022

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/J2210/D/21/3288558

65 Whitstable Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 8DG.

- 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 and Mrs Kwok against the decision of Canterbury City Council.
 - The application Ref CA/21/02263, dated 14 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 10 November 2021.
 - The development proposed is the removal of existing roof structure and formation of new mansard roof design complete with dormer windows and raised parapet.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue to be whether the proposed development would serve to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Canterbury (Whitstable Road) Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two-storey detached dwelling located on the corner of Ramsey Close and Whitstable Road. It is within the Canterbury (Whitstable Road) Conservation Area. The immediate area is characterised by residential development. As I saw there is a rich variety of both traditional and contemporary architectural styles present in the conservation area.
4. Number 65 is a detached house, that has had a two-storey side extension added. Although numbers 67 and 69 on the opposite corner are a pair of houses they are of a similar date, architectural style and form to number 65. As identified by the Council, despite some material alterations to number 65, they form a balanced flanking of this junction within the conservation area.
5. The appellants propose a contemporary roof addition to form a new second floor. The roof addition would be in the form of a zinc sheet covered mansard style roof. It would incorporate six dormer windows with three to the front and one to the rear elevation having Juliet balconies.
6. The new mansard roof would have a higher ridge line than the existing house and the mansard form of the roof would be a substantive departure from the existing simple pitched roof. Amongst other things the mansard roof would

present a large bland gable end to Ramsey Close and to views south eastwards along Whitstable Road. Further, the balanced entrance to Ramsey Close would be severely denuded.

7. To my mind the mansard roof covered in zinc sheet together with prominent dormers with Juliet balconies would appear as a dominant, discordant, and thereby incongruous feature in the street scape and thereby harmful to the character and appearance of the conservation area. In reaching this conclusion I have had regard to the variety of styles and forms of buildings in the conservation area.
8. I therefore conclude in respect of the main issue that the development as designed would fail to serve to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Canterbury (Whitstable Road) Conservation Area.
9. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, which include conservation areas. It draws a distinction between substantial harm and less than substantial harm to such an asset. For the latter, which applies here, the test is that the harm should be weighed against public benefits, including securing the optimum viable use.
10. The proposed development would provide some limited economic benefit. However, given the harm that has been identified I conclude that the public benefits would not outweigh this harm, or the conflict that it would have with the objectives of Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Framework and Policies DBE6, DBE3, HE1 and HE6 of the Canterbury District Local Plan (Adopted July 2017) as they relate to the quality of development that, along with other things, is compatible with the character of the original building and the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Other Matters

11. I note that the application, the subject of this appeal followed from a pre-application request and that advice was generally positive. However, the current proposal is a major departure from the pre-application scheme. In any case, as advised at the time, the advice was given without prejudice to the Council's normal decision making process. Further, I can only assess the current proposal on the basis of the scheme design before me.

Conclusions

12. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR