



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 November 2023

by P Terceiro BSc MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th December 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Z2260/W/22/3313633

15a Hardres Street, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 8QD

- 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 Osburn (Safesite Developments Ltd) against the decision of Thanet District Council.
 - The application Ref F/TH/22/1273, dated 15 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 25 November 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as proposed mansard roof extension to existing maisonette building with associated internal works, and two rear dormers with associated windows.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Section E of the appeal form provides a different description of development to that in the application form, albeit it indicates that the description has not changed. For the avoidance of doubt, I have used the description of development provided in the application form in the banner heading above.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the local area, bearing in mind the special attention that should be paid to the extent to which it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Ramsgate Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. The site falls within the Ramsgate CA which incorporates a mix of areas including the sea front and commercial areas. In the site's vicinity the character of the CA, and thus its significance, derives from the narrow nature of the streets representing the historic nature of the town.
5. The stretch of Hardres Street where the site is located is narrow with the buildings sited close to the pavement and it is characterised by terraced Victorian townhouses and sporadic Georgian architecture. The surrounding roofscape includes flat roofs, parapet walls, gables and dormers with various chimneys. The buildings are externally finished in materials such as brick, render or pebble dash.
6. The appeal site is a mid-terrace property fronting Hardres Street. The terrace is cornered by 17 Hardres Street (No 17) which has a higher parapet wall, and by 5 Hardres Street (No 5) which is a 4- storeys property with a pitched roof of a

more flamboyant style. The mid terrace properties have parapet walls of different heights. To the rear of the terrace the properties have small yards which front onto Union Street, and there is a dwelling with a garage. The rear roofscape includes pitched roofs, flat roofs and parapet walls with chimneys. Due to its prominent chimneys, roof form and materials the terrace makes an important contribution to the significance of the CA.

7. In the front elevation, the proposal would comprise the installation of a substantial mansard roof that would project above the parapet wall of both adjoining properties and therefore appear unduly prominent. Despite the variety in terms of roof shape, there are no other mansards in this row of terraces, so the proposal would form an unsympathetic addition that would diverge from its prevailing character and appear incongruous. In order to accommodate the proposal, the property's chimney stacks would be removed, which would be harmful to the local character where chimneys have a strong presence and make a positive contribution to the street scene, notwithstanding their condition.
8. To the rear, the proposal would comprise two dormer windows and occupy the space between both chimneys, while projecting above the adjacent roof lines. In doing so, the proposal would result in a dominant roof form that would appear incongruous in the roofscape present in the terrace.
9. During my site visit I observed the appeal property from the surrounding roads. Views from Staffordshire Street and from Broad Street would be largely screened by existing buildings. Despite its set-back, the mansard would be visible in the street scene of Hardres Street, as the provision of a parapet wall would offer very limited mitigation against the scale of the mansard. The rear dormers would be exposed in the street scene of Union Street above the existing built form to the rear, so the existing buildings would not offer sufficient mitigation against public views towards the proposal.
10. My attention is drawn to a mansard roof in a property on the High Street. However, the mansard is a feature of this building's design, so it would offer very little justification for this proposal, as this scheme seeks to introduce a mansard into a row of terraces where this roof form is not present.
11. Reference is also made to a mansard roof in 88 Queen Street. However, this property is located outside the CA and has a limited visual relationship with it. 81-85 High Street is a new build construction other than an enlargement of an existing property. As such, these examples would not be comparable with the proposed development.
12. I understand that the appellant submitted revised materials during the application. Whereas the use of appropriate materials could be secured by planning condition were I minded to allow the appeal, this would not overcome the harm associated with the form and design of the proposal that I have identified above.
13. For the above reasons, the proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the CA. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that where proposals would lead to less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

14. The appellant has put forward that the proposal would improve the safety and quality of accommodation. Whereas this may be the case, I have not been provided with compelling evidence to demonstrate that the proposal is the only means to achieve this. As such, these public benefits would be insufficient to outweigh the great weight I must attach to the harm I have identified to the designated heritage asset.
15. Thus, overall, I conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the host building and local area, and it would fail to preserve the character or appearance of the Ramsgate CA. As a consequence, the proposal would be contrary to Policies HE02 and QD02 of the Local Plan 2020. These policies support well-designed development that promotes or reinforces the local character of the area, responds sympathetically to the historic settlement pattern and relates well to adjoining buildings in terms of proportions of features and design details. Further, the proposal would conflict with the Framework, where it seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment.

Conclusion

16. Overall, I conclude that the proposed development would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations of sufficient weight to indicate that a decision should be made otherwise than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

P Terceiro

INSPECTOR