



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 December 2023

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 January 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/U2235/D/23/3329164

Broadlands, North Pole Road, Barming, Kent, ME16 9HG.

- 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 C. Walsh against the decision of Maidstone Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 23/502047/FULL, dated 26 April 2023, was refused by notice dated 27 June 2023.
 - The development proposed is Part garage conversion into a habitable space, erection of first floor rear extension including insertion of a Juliet balcony and changes to fenestration.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. I have adopted the wording for the description of development in the bullet point above used by the Council in drafting its decision notice, as it more succinctly describes the development proposed rather than that set out on the original planning application form.

Main Issue

3. I consider the main issue in this case to be the effect of the proposed development on the architectural integrity of the host property and thereby the character and appearance of the local area.

Reasons

4. Broadlands is a striking contemporary styled two-storey detached house. Although the main roof is gabled the property comprises a complex amalgam of varies flat and pitched roof forms.
5. It is located in the village of Barming, which for planning purposes is defined as being within the countryside. Nevertheless, the property is located in an area that I would characterise as predominately residential in character.
6. The appellant proposes a gabled roof first-floor rear extension that would project out over part of the existing flat roofed single storey rear extension. A partial conversion of the existing garage to provide additional habitable accommodation is also proposed.

7. There is an existing fully glazed gable roofed two-storey projection to the front of the dwelling, forming a double storey porch, which also serves to light the first-floor landing. When viewed in true elevation from the rear the proposed extension would reflect the design of the front porch and thereby generally harmonise with the current design of the house. However, when viewed from the north and south sides it would add further to the complex, irregular and somewhat unattractive bulky appearance of the house.
8. This further addition would, when taken together with the previous earlier additions and extensions, serve to subsume what would have been the original dwelling.
9. I acknowledge that the proposal, being at the rear and set in the centre of the property, would not impact to any great extent on the visual amenity of the street scene. Nevertheless, for the reasons set out above, I conclude in respect of the main issue, that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the architectural integrity of the host property and thereby the character and appearance of the local area.
10. To allow the extension as designed would be contrary to the objectives of Policies SP17, DM1, DM30 and DM32 of the Maidstone Borough Council's *Maidstone Borough Local Plan* (Adopted October 2017), the design guidance contained in the Maidstone Borough Council *Maidstone Local Development Framework-Residential Extensions* Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted May 2009) and the National Planning Policy Framework. As they relate to, along with other things, the quality of development and its impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Other Matters

11. I agree with the appellant that the proposed addition would not result in any further encroachment of built development into the countryside. I also appreciate that the proposal would not cause harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. However, the absence of harm is a neutral factor in my considerations and, as such, I have given this matter very little weight in my decision.

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