



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2024

by Stewart Glassar BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 FEBRUARY 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/J2210/D/23/3333165

Waltersville Bullockstone Road, Herne Bay CT6 7NL

- 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 Walters against the decision of Canterbury City Council.
 - The application Ref CA/23/01001, dated 30 May 2023, was refused by notice dated 24 August 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as 'first floor extension and single storey extensions to front and rear'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the dwelling and wider area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises an existing single storey detached dwelling with accommodation within the roof space. The dwelling is one of a number of buildings that form a loose knit ribbon of development on the western side of Bullockstone Road. Other than the large commercial garage unit, the majority of these buildings appear to be dwellings.
4. The houses are typically set well back from their front boundaries although there is not a consistent building line. Similarly, there is variety in terms of the design and appearance of the buildings as well as in the use of external materials.
5. Most of the dwellings are single storey and have modest plot widths. Some do have accommodation within the roof space, but it is only at either end of this ribbon of development where the buildings are more clearly one and a half and two storeys in height.
6. The appeal property is one of the largest single storey buildings in terms of its width and height. As it is positioned amongst smaller buildings, these features are evident from the road. Whilst this makes the building easier to distinguish from its neighbours, the existing building is not so prominent as to appear incongruous or harmful.
7. The proposal would increase the building's footprint, squaring off the front of the dwelling and increasing the depth to the rear. A new first floor would be installed but this would generally mirror the existing footprint of the building

and so would not encompass the full extent of the enlarged ground floor. The building's overall height would be increased but some of the first floor accommodation would be contained within the new roof space and the new main roof would have a shallower pitch than the existing roof.

8. Despite including these features which are no doubt designed to minimise the size and scale of the works, and thus their visual effect, the result would nevertheless be a significantly larger building. The principal and side elevations would have a much greater overall massing, that would noticeably contrast with the immediately neighbouring bungalows.
9. Once extended, the building would have a strident, discordant and overpowering appearance. As a result, it would dominate and significantly harm this part of the street scene. The taller buildings in the area are set a sufficient distance from the appeal site that they do not define its visual context or character.
10. I note that the appeal property is a simple building of no particular architectural value in itself and that the scheme would offer comparative enhancements, particularly in relation to the internal accommodation. However, these matters do not override the harm that would result from the design, scale and height of the building.
11. I recognise that the appellant has sought the views of the Council in the light of the previous appeal decision and sought to make alterations as a result. However, they do not go so far as to remedy the issues identified.
12. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore conflict with Policies DBE3 and DBE6 of the Canterbury District Local Plan 2017 which, amongst other things, seek to ensure that development does not harm the streetscape or wider context and character of an area.
13. The proposal would also be contrary to provisions within the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which include requirements that development should add to the overall quality of an area and be sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

14. The appellant highlights other extensions to dwellings that have been approved nearby and new houses which are being built in the vicinity of the appeal site. Whilst these provide useful context and information, I have considered the appeal proposal on its individual merits and with regard to the specific circumstances of the site and its surrounds.
15. It is suggested that the proposal represents an efficient use of land, in accordance with the Framework. However, paragraph 128 of the Framework is quite clear that making efficient use of land should not be at any cost. Amongst other things its use must take into account the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting; and the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places. As I have found that the proposal would not meet these objectives, it would conflict with the Framework's approach to the efficient use of land.

Conclusion

16. The proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area and would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan.
17. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

Stewart Glassar

INSPECTOR