



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 February 2024

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st March 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/D3830/D/23/3333915

Flat 4 Old Mill House, Cuckfield Road, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex, BN6 9LL.

- 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 Neil Thomas against the decision of Mid Sussex District Council.
 - The application Ref DM/23/0525, dated 21 February 2023, was refused by notice dated 19 September 2023.
 - The development proposed is a conservatory to be built on the front balcony.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters and Main Issues

2. Old Mill House is not a statutory listed property. However, during the planning application process the Council, as it is entitled to do under paragraph 040 of the Planning Practice Guidance, identified it as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA).
3. Accordingly, I consider the main issue in this case to be the effect of the proposal on the architectural integrity of the Old Mill House and thereby its significance as a non-designated heritage asset.

Reasons

4. Old Mill House is a large detached, former Edwardian country house, in landscaped grounds. It has been subdivided into 5 flats.
5. The flat, the subject of this appeal is number 4 located at first floor level. It has an external balcony to the north façade of the property. This has been formed over a more recent flat roofed single storey ground floor addition.
6. The application proposes a conservatory. However, the application drawings illustrate a traditional vernacular extension, to be formed in brick with expressed timber framing and a gable ended and tiled pitched roof, all to match the main house.
7. The existing flat roof extension is utilitarian in appearance and detracts from the architectural character of the host property. Accordingly, therefore in principle a well-designed first floor addition might well, by removing the flat roof addition serve to enhance the appearance of property overall.

8. However, for the following reasons, the current design would not be of the quality of design to achieve that objective.
9. Firstly, due to the choice of a masonry addition with heavy faux timber framing the extension would appear overlay bulky, and compete visually with the original form and architectural detailing of the host property.
10. Secondly, from the design drawings I see that the proposed new roof would appear to finish short of the ornate chimney and not be built into the half-hipped roof of the host property. As well as creating a very awkward abutment detail to weather the addition would not appear as a natural extension of the host property. Thereby, giving it significant prominence that would cause visual harm to the existing property.
11. Thirdly, the proposed addition would not obscure the original mock timber framing as it returns along the end wall of the host property. However, the gable roof would form an uncomfortable visual relationship to the existing ornate chimney stack and thereby detract from its prominence.
12. I therefore conclude in respect of the main issue that the proposed addition would cause significant harm to architectural integrity of the host property and thereby its significance as NDHA. Consequently, it would not accord with objectives of Policies DP26 and DP34 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (Adopted March 2018) as well as the Mid Sussex District Council's Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted November 2020), as they relate, along with other things, to achieving a quality of development that respects both the private and public realm.

Conclusions

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

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR