



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 02 July 2024

by E Dade BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19th July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Z2260/W/23/3328209

Ebbsfleet House, Ebbsfleet Lane, Ramsgate CT12 5DJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Priory Group against the decision of Thanet District Council.
 - The application Ref is F/TH/23/0527.
 - The development proposed is erection of two-storey side pitched roof extension and single storey front and rear flat roofed extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of two-storey side pitched roof extension and single storey front and rear flat roofed extensions at Ebbsfleet House, Ebbsfleet Lane, Ramsgate CT12 5DJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref F/TH/23/0527, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing nos 2862-01A Existing Site Plan and Location Plan; 2862-02A Existing Floor Plans; 2862-03A Proposed Site Plan; 2862-04H Proposed Floor Plans; 2862-99B As Built / Existing Elevations; 2862-100B Proposed Elevations.
 - 2) The external materials of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the original building.

Preliminary Matters

2. Planning permission was previously granted for erection of a two-storey pitched roof side extension, single storey flat roof rear extension and single storey flat roof front porch extension¹. However, construction of the permitted scheme failed to take account of the change in land levels across the site. Consequently, the built extensions are greater in height than approved through the former scheme. In this regard, the extensions have not been built in accordance with the permitted scheme.
3. The appeal proposal seeks to remediate any harm associated with the height of the development through reducing the roof ridge height of the two-storey extension. It is my understanding that the layout, massing, choice of materials, and general design and appearance of the constructed development reflect the permitted scheme. Therefore, in my reasoning, I have focussed principally on the height of the extensions and fenestration, and the appearance of the roof of the two-storey extension as proposed by the appeal scheme.

¹ LPA Ref: F/TH/21/0081

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises a small residential care home and its garden areas. The appeal property is situated at the end of a row of dwellings, and therefore differs in use to surrounding buildings.
6. The adjacent row comprises regularly spaced detached dwellings. Whilst painted exteriors and single storey projections provide some variation, the dwellings have a simple, modern, pitched roof form. The appeal property has a front roof hip with a prominent chimney stack atop a central ridge, situated behind a parapet. The appeal property therefore differs in form and appearance from the adjacent row of dwellings.
7. The appeal property and row of dwellings are situated on one side of an access road with no pedestrian footway. The group of buildings is outside of any settlement. Views of the site would therefore normally be experienced from passing vehicles at Ramsgate Road and Ebbsfleet Lane.
8. The group of buildings are set back from the junction of Ebbsfleet Lane and Ramsgate Road by an amenity area comprising grass and mature trees. A vegetated highway verge next to the appeal site's side boundary provides separation from Ramsgate Road. There is a tree belt behind the appeal site. The appeal property, including the two-storey and front extension, are visible from Ramsgate Road and Ebbsfleet Lane. However, the set back from the highway and screening from surrounding trees serve to reduce the visual prominence of the appeal property within the street scene.
9. The two-storey extension has been constructed with a parapet and front roof hip. The proposal would provide a false pitched roof with a flat central area to the two-storey extension. The overall height of the proposed roof would be broadly level with the main building's roof. The proposed roof would not therefore exceed the roof ridge height of the main building.
10. The design of the proposed roof would differ from the main building's roof. However, through its pitched sides, the form of the proposed roof would be similar to the hipped roof of the main building. Therefore, the proposed roof would not appear architecturally unrelated or contrived.
11. The proposed roof's eaves would appear to sit above the eaves of the main building. However, due to the change in land levels, the roof line of the adjacent row of dwellings sits higher than the appeal property. The proposed roof form would appear to provide a transition between the roof line of the appeal property and adjacent row of dwellings.
12. The window on the front elevation of the two-storey extension sits higher than first floor windows of the main building. However, the window is equal in size and appearance to the windows to the main building's windows. Therefore, the single front window at the two-storey extension does not outcompete the pair of windows at the first floor of the main building's front elevation.

13. The proposed roof would be separate from the roof of the main building. The two-storey extension connects to the main building via a lower linking section. The two-storey extension is narrower than the front elevation of the main building. Therefore, the form and massing of the two-storey extension provides visual separation between the built volumes of the main building and extension.
14. As discussed above, the proposed roof would result in a two-storey extension of comparable height to the main building. However, the two-storey extension would be of lesser scale and mass than the main building, is set back from its front elevation of the main building, and through its single window includes fewer features of visual interest. For these reasons, I am satisfied the two-storey extension would appear subservient to the main building.
15. The front extension's flat roof sits atop a horizontal band on the main building's front elevation, providing some synergy with the main building's design. Whilst sited prominently at the front of the building, through its single storey, flat-roofed form, the front extension appears subservient to the main building. The flat roofed single storey rear extension provides a bedroom and bathroom and appears modest in scale relative to the main building. The rear extension is behind the main building, obscured from view from public vantage points. The single storey extensions therefore have a neutral effect on the area's character.
16. As set out above, the site is set back from the highway and partially screened by mature vegetation. This would reduce the visual prominence of the proposal within the street scene. The proposal would not therefore appear to be at odds with surrounding development or a discordant feature within the street scene.
17. For the reasons set out above, I consider the height of the proposal and its relationship to the host building proposal would be acceptable. Therefore, the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the area.
18. The proposal would therefore comply with Thanet Local Plan Policy QD02 which requires development reinforce local character, relate to surrounding development, form and layout, respect and enhance the character of the area and be compatible with neighbouring buildings and spaces.
19. The proposal would satisfy paragraphs 135 and 140 of the National Planning Policy Framework which require development be sympathetic to local character and ensure the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion.

Other Matters

20. Concerns were raised regarding disturbance from the existing use of the building. The proposed development would not change nor significantly intensify the building's use.
21. The two-storey extension is next to the shared boundary with a neighbouring dwelling. The two-storey extension is mainly forward of the dwelling and would not overlook the neighbouring rear garden. The proposal is not expected to alter the existing side-facing windows which are fitted with obscure glazing. Existing boundary treatments would prevent overlooking from ground floor windows and the distance to the boundary would ensure the development does not appear overbearing. Therefore, I am satisfied the proposal would not harm living conditions of neighbours.

Conditions

- 22. Since the proposed development is partly implemented, I have not imposed the standard time limit for commencement of development. In the interests of certainty, I have attached a condition specifying the approved plans.
- 23. To maintain the character and appearance of the area, I have attached a condition requiring external materials match the existing building.

Conclusion

- 24. For the reasons given above, having regard to the development plan taken as a whole and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude the appeal should be allowed.

E Dade

INSPECTOR