



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 July 2025

by E Dade BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24th July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/U2235/D/25/3360196

19 Trapham Road, Maidstone, Kent ME16 0EL

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission under section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the development of land carried out without complying with conditions subject to which a previous planning permission was granted.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Ashley Mason against the decision of Maidstone Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 24/503998/FULL, dated 24 September 2024, was refused by notice dated 25 November 2024.
 - The application sought planning permission for erection of a single storey rear extension and two storey front extension, including loft conversion with rear dormer (revised scheme to 19/503588/FULL) without complying with a condition attached to planning permission Ref 21/503777/FULL, dated 04 March 2022.
 - The condition in dispute is no 3 which states that: The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - The reason given for the condition is: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. As confirmed by the application, development has commenced. At time of my site visit, structural works were substantially complete, and some external materials had been fitted. However, installation of finishing materials was not complete.
3. The Council indicate that its Decision Notice incorrectly identifies conflict with Policy LPRHOU11 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review 2024 (LPR) and omitted to conclude against LPR Policy LPRHOU2. The planning officer's report identifies LPR Policies LPRSP15 and LPRHOU2 as the most relevant policies to the proposal, with the Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document SPD comprising a material consideration. Therefore, no party would be prejudiced by my assessment of the proposal against Policy LPRHOU2.

Main Issues

4. The proposal seeks to change condition no 3 for the purpose of utilising external materials which do not match those used in the existing building. The main issue is therefore the effect of the proposed materials on the character and appearance of the appeal property and area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a detached, two-storey house which is understood to date from the 1960s and has been extended and re-modelled. The photograph of the appeal property prior to the approved extension works shows the original dwelling had a tiled roof, brick two-storey pitched front gable and end elevation, and a section of white painted render at the ground floor front elevation.
6. Trapham Road is a cul-de-sac of dwellings which address the street and culminate around a turning head. Behind dwelling plots, tall mature trees provide enclosure. Trapham Road therefore has a quiet, suburban character, distinct from surrounding streets.
7. There are a variety of dwelling designs along Trapham Road. For example, many dwellings have a two-storey front gable, whilst others have a catslide roof over a garage to the front. However, dwellings are generally traditional in appearance, with a detached, two-storey form, constructed of brick, with pitched roofs, and chimneys at the gable ends.
8. Some dwellings incorporate sections of tile hung wall, stone facing, or render, as a secondary architectural feature. In addition, some dwellings have been altered, extended, or modernised, for example, nos 9 and 20 have painted render finishes and no 20 includes a contemporary feature window. Whilst there is variation in its colour and type, brick comprises the primary external finishing material and provides a cohesive appearance to dwellings within the street.
9. The appeal property is generally typical of development within the cul-de-sac. However, it is sited forward of neighbouring dwellings, closer to the highway edge. The approved alterations have added substantial bulk and mass to the front of the building and roof, and the side elevations and roof form are clearly visible through the gaps between neighbouring dwellings. Therefore, by virtue of its scale and siting, the appeal property is visually prominent within the street scene.
10. The submitted elevation plans indicate the proposed finishing materials including white painted render at ground floor level above a brick plinth, and horizontal, grey, cedar cladding at the upper floors. The two storey, front gable would be vertically clad with cedar. Windows and doors would be anthracite grey uPVC, and the roof would comprise grey tiles. The proposed materials seek to achieve a contemporary aesthetic.
11. The Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2009 (SPD) advises that good quality design relies on the choice and combination of materials and is crucial to the success of a scheme. The SPD states that choice of materials should respond to, and reinforce, the character of the area, and generally, the materials of an extension within the built-up area should match those used on the original building.
12. The extension works include a single-storey rear extension, two storey front extension, and a loft conversion with rear dormer. The previously approved elevation plans indicate brick as the main finishing material, and therefore the existing planning permission was determined on the basis that the external finishes would match the host dwelling.

13. Whilst weatherboarding and timber cladding are not commonly used materials at Trapham Road, as discussed above, variety exists in the street scene and therefore there is some capacity to incorporate alternative materials. However, the appeal proposal would include extensive use of cladding and render across all elevations to comprise the dominant finishing materials.
14. Consequently, whilst a brick plinth would be visible at the base of the front extension, no elevation would be wholly or mainly finished in brick.
15. Brick is a characteristic feature of dwellings within Trapham Road, including the original dwelling. Through the extent of the use of the proposed alternative materials and omission of brick as a main finishing material, the proposed materials would not match those used on the original dwelling. Rather, the proposal would wholly change the external appearance of the dwelling.
16. Due to the appeal property's siting forward of neighbouring dwellings, materials at the front and side elevation would be visually prominent from the street. As a consequence of the proposed materials, the extension works would appear excessively dominant within the street scene, and out of keeping with surrounding dwellings. The proposed development would therefore appear incongruous and would detract from the area's cohesive character.
17. The appellant has drawn my attention to dwellings in the surrounding area which utilise a range of materials such as render, weatherboarding and cladding at nos 2, 4, 6, 8, 11, and 17 Hazlett Drive, and 3A and 6 Vicary Way. Trapham Road and Hazlett Drive are both cul-de-sac developments accessed from Vicary Way. However, the appeal property is situated toward the southern end of Trapham Road and is not viewed within the context of Vicary Way or Hazlett Drive.
18. Within Vicary Way and Hazlett Drive there is a greater range of dwelling types and variety in the scale, form, siting, and orientation of dwellings. There is greater visual connectivity between these streets and other connecting streets. Therefore, dwellings at Vicary Way and Hazlett Drive differ in context and character to the appeal site and consequently have a differing capacity to accommodate alternative materials. Therefore, I do not consider the presence of contemporary materials at dwellings at nearby streets would justify the proposal.
19. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the appeal property and area. I therefore consider the disputed condition is reasonable and necessary to ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development which complements the area's character and appearance.
20. Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) supports proposals which are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, are sympathetic to local character including the surrounding built environment, and establish or maintain a strong sense of place, including through use of materials. Framework paragraph 139 indicates that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.
21. The proposal would therefore conflict with LPR Policies LPRSP15 and LPRHOU2 which together require proposals incorporate a high quality, modern design approach and make use of vernacular materials where appropriate and require the

appearance of extension proposals fit unobtrusively with the existing building, the character of the street scene and/or its context.

Other Matters

22. The proposed elevation and ground floor plans show the addition of a feature window to the front elevation, a permeable driveway surfacing of the front garden, and concrete footpath to the side of the dwelling. The appellant asserts that consent is not sought for these alterations. In determining the appeal, it is not necessary to assess such design changes since they are unrelated to the disputed condition which concerns the materials used in the construction of the external surfaces of the approved extension works. Since I am dismissing the appeal and have found the disputed condition to be reasonable and necessary, the submitted plans have no formal planning status.

Conclusion

23. For the reasons given above, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

E Dade

INSPECTOR