



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 July 2015

by **Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 11 August 2015

Appeal Ref: APP/V2255/W/14/3000779

8 School Lane, Newington, Nr. Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 7LB.

- 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 Paul Taylor against the decision of Swale Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 14/501843/FULL, dated 8 July 2014.
 - The development proposed for a two storey front and side extension with additional windows to north west elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The description set out in the bullet point above is the revised wording agreed between the parties following submission of the planning application.
3. The Council did not determine the application within the prescribed period but its appeal statement indicated that it would have refused the application for two reasons, namely:

1. *The proposed extension by virtue of its scale, bulk and design would harm the character and appearance of the dwelling itself and the character and appearance of the streetscene contrary to Policies E1, E19 and E24 of the Swale Borough Local Plan 2008.*

2. *The proposed extension would, by virtue of its bulk, scale, design and proximity to the adjacent grade II listed building (Parsonage House), have an unacceptable impact on the setting of this listed building contrary to Policies E1 and E14 of the Swale Borough Local Plan.*

Main Issues

4. I have considered the application afresh and consider the main issues to be:
 - a) the effect of the proposed development on the architectural integrity of the host building and thereby the character and appearance of the streetscene; and
 - b) whether the proposed development would serve to preserve the setting of the adjacent building, listed grade II, Parsonage House.
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Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The property the subject of this appeal, number 8 School Lane, is a relatively modern two-storey detached dwelling, situated in a mature garden plot. The house is located in a residential area characterised by a mix of properties of different styles and designs. The neighbouring property to the west, Parsonage House (formerly listed as the Cottage, Parsonage Farm), is a detached C.17 house, listed grade II, set with its main frontage at right angles to the lane, facing towards number 8. To the east of the main house and set further back from the road frontage is a later single storey detached garage.
6. Number 8 has previously been extended with the result it has uncharacteristically long bland flank walls, accentuated by the limited fenestration and, in the case of the west elevation, almost no architectural modulation. The appellant proposes a two-storey front and side extension. With careful attention to the architectural detail the proposed extension to the front of the house, as drawn, may result in a not unattractive front elevation. However, as clearly illustrated on the application drawings, it would serve to further elongate the property in a manner that would be unsympathetic to the scale and form of the dwelling adding considerably to the unattractive form and bulk of the flank walls.
7. The existing planting would, to some extent, screen the flank walls as extended. However, the flank walls, in particular that to the west, would nevertheless be open to some, albeit limited, views from both the public and private domain. While the forward projection of the house would not be as deep as previously proposed (Appeal Ref: APP/V2255/D/2140524), it would nevertheless result in the house as extended appearing prominent and incongruous in the streetscene, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the host building and thereby the surrounding area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policies E1, E19 and E24 of the Swale Borough Local Plan (Adopted February 2008) LP as they relate to, amongst other things, the quality of design.

Setting of the listed building

8. As identified by the Inspector who considered the previous appeal, the neighbouring listed dwelling is as I saw, *a notable feature in the streetscene, visible in longer views from the junction of Church Lane to the east*. He further recognised that there was no development in School Lane beyond Parsonage House and found *its existing relative isolation to be an important factor in its setting*. From what I have seen and read I would concur with these findings.
9. The forward projection of this extension would be less than previously proposed and, at ground floor level, set further in from the property boundary to the west. Even so, it would, in my opinion, still be visible in longer views thereby diminishing the existing gap that by reason of the existing dwelling's location back behind its neighbours to the east, currently separates the more modern development to the east of the farmhouse from it. Accordingly, the extension would fall within its setting. Although to a lesser extent than the previous proposal, I consider that this development would nevertheless fail to preserve the setting of the building contrary to the aims of LP Policies E1 and E14.

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10. The appellant has drawn to my attention that planning permission has recently been granted for 14 dwellings at Parsonage Farm. In the event that this development is built out as designed then it would to some extent change the setting of Parsonage House when viewed from the west. However, as the principal elevation of the listed dwelling faces the appeal site, I do not consider that this consideration diminishes my concern in respect of the unacceptable effect of the proposed addition on the setting of the listed property.

Other Matters

11. The appellant has also drawn to my attention concerns relating to how the Council dealt with both his original pre-application enquiry and then, subsequently, the planning application. While I can appreciate his apparent frustration, these considerations are however not relevant to my consideration of the planning merits of this appeal.

Conclusions

12. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, including the support for the proposal from a neighbour, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR