Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 February 2025

by C Coles MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 MARCH 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M3835/D/24/3356128
143 Palatine Road, Castle, WORTHING, West Sussex BN12 6JR

- 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 Mr James Thomas against the decision of Worthing Borough Council.
- The application Ref AWDM/0837/24.
- The development is described as 'Batten, insulate, breathable felt and then clad with Cedral Fibre Cement board cladding in light grey (c05) to existing walls to front of property. All works on ground floor level'.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. At the time of my site visit the Cedral Fibre Cement board cladding was already in situ. I have determined the appeal on the basis that planning permission is being sought retrospectively for the erection of the cladding.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the cladding on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is located on Palatine Road which contains a mix of detached houses and semi-detached bungalows. The dwellings along this part of Palatine Road, including No 143, are semi-detached bungalows sharing a common design, form and scale. Each of the properties has a gabled front projection. These are almost exclusively constructed of brick, but I also noted some bungalows with render on their front elevations.

5. Permission has already been granted to render and paint white the external walls of the projecting gable of the appeal property (Ref AWDM/0898/20). Instead, the walls have been clad in light grey horizontal boarding. The approved render would have been a departure from the brickwork which is the predominant material in the area. However, it would not have been entirely out of character given that some properties include an element of render. By contrast, the grey cladding jars with the mellow red brickwork of surrounding dwellings. Its coloration and appearance makes it visually prominent and an alien feature in the street scene.

6. The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 'Extending or altering your home' explains that the facing materials of any extension should ideally match those used for the existing house. If identical materials are not available, the nearest possible alternative should be used and should match the originals in size, shape and texture. Whilst this is not an extension, the same principles apply. The cladding does not match the materials on the original dwelling, or reflect other materials in use locally, and thus it does not relate well to its context.

7. In support of the appeal, the appellant has drawn attention to other properties in the neighbourhood that include cladding. These properties are in the minority with the cladding covering the upper gable of the front projection. None of the examples presented have light grey cladding covering the entire front and side elevations of the forward projection. For this reason, they are not directly comparable to the appeal scheme.

8. Accordingly, I conclude that the development causes material harm to the character and appearance of the area. It therefore conflicts with Policy DM5 of the Worthing Borough Council Local Plan 2020-2036 insofar as it seeks to secure development of a high architectural and design quality that respects and enhances the character of the site and the prevailing character of the area.

Other Matters

9. The appellant references the environmental benefit of exterior cladding on energy efficiency and reducing the carbon footprint of the dwelling. The evidence before me does not demonstrate that this is the only material which would achieve the environmental benefits desired. Other more traditional materials may have a similar effect on energy efficiency. The harm to the character and appearance of the area is not outweighed by the environmental benefits of the cladding.

10. Matters surrounding the lawfulness of the cladding are not before me to determine under a S78 appeal. It is open to the appellant to apply to the Council for a separate determination under Sections 191/192 of the Act regardless of the outcome of the appeal.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

C Coles

INSPECTOR