
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 September 2016

by Mr Kim Bennett BSc DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 04 October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/V1505/D/16/3154546
16 Bruce Grove, Wickford, Essex SS11 8QN

- 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 & Mrs Holliman against the decision of Basildon Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/00245/FULL, dated 23 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 15 April 2016.
 - The development proposed is a first floor side extension over garage and roof/internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene.

Reasons

3. Number 16 Bruce Grove comprises a detached chalet style bungalow with a gable end fronting the road and with an attached garage on its eastern side. The property is located within a row of bungalows, although all are to different designs, but elsewhere along the road there are also semi-detached houses with a variety of designs and mix of materials.
4. Planning permission was refused in 2015 and subsequently dismissed on appeal for a roof enlargement with dormers, the Inspector finding that it would appear over dominant and cramped on the site¹. The current proposal has sought to overcome those issues by revising the roof form to a half hip, setting it in off the boundary by 1 metre above the garage and by deleting a dormer window. Whilst I acknowledge the genuine efforts to address the previous concerns, in my view it would result in different design issues which are of equal concern.
5. In setting the first floor element in from the boundary, which would accord with general Council design guidance, it would result in an unsightly design detail comprising a small section of flat roof between the flank wall of the garage and the flank wall of the extension. Additionally, although the half hip roof seeks to lessen the impact of the extension, it would be slightly higher than the

¹ Appeal Ref No APP/V1505/D/15/3132513

previously proposed roof and at odds with the overall pitched and gable ended character of the existing bungalow. Finally, the proposed front dormer would relate poorly to the adjacent roof areas, introducing a further incongruous element, and would be to a wholly different design than the proposed flat roof dormer on the western side of the building. A combination of the above would result in a disparate number of design details which would adversely affect the character and appearance of the existing bungalow and would cause visual harm to the wider street scene as a result.

6. I acknowledge that there are a variety of designs elsewhere along the road, including a modern design at No 82 Bruce Grove which my attention has been drawn to. I also acknowledge that the adjacent property, No 14 Bruce Grove, has been extended with roof dormers but in my view the scale, design and proportions of those do not raise the same concerns as the appeal proposal. The issue therefore is not how the property would relate to other designs in the street scene, but the design issues of the proposal itself.
7. With regard to the impact of the proposed extension, I remain concerned, as my Inspector colleague did, that it would appear cramped on the site in relation to the street scene generally. Although the first floor element would be set in by 1 metre from the boundary, the overall impact would still be generally that of a two storey built form in close proximity to the boundary with No 14 Bruce Grove which is of a smaller scale.
8. Although there are exceptions, I observed generally along the street that where bungalows are alongside each other, there is either the width of a driveway between them, or at most a single storey garage, as there is currently at the appeal property. In my view the additional mass of extension in the form proposed would still result in a cramped appearance and out of character generally with similar types of property in close proximity and elsewhere. I acknowledge that the property directly opposite at No 9 Bruce Grove has a two storey extension adjacent to the common boundary. However, whilst it is a two storey house as opposed to a bungalow, it is also adjacent to a community hall and separated by a wide access. The design issues are therefore different.
9. I have had regard to the privacy and overlooking concerns expressed by a local resident but agree with the Council that they would not be of such concern to justify a refusal, and appropriate conditions could have been imposed had I had come to a different finding.
10. For the above reasons, the proposal would be in conflict with Saved Policy BAS BE12 of the Basildon District Local Plan 2007 as well as the objectives in paragraph 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework in that the proposed design would cause harm to the character of the host property and the wider street scene, and the opportunity has not been taken to improve the character and quality of the building in the context of its relationship to nearby properties.
11. Accordingly, the appeal should be dismissed.

Kim Bennett

INSPECTOR