

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 October 2016

by Patrick Whelan BA(Hons) Dip Arch MA MSc ARB RIBA RTPI

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

Decision date: 20 October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/M1520/D/16/3156821

194 Waarden Road, Canvey Island, Essex SS8 9BE

- 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 S L Patching against the decision of Castle Point Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 15/0908/FUL, dated 1 November 2015, was refused by notice dated 26 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is to raise the roof to form two bedrooms and bathroom at new first floor level.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted to raise the roof to form two bedrooms and bathroom at new first floor level, at 194 Waarden Road, Canvey Island, Essex SS8 9BE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 15/0908/FUL dated 1 November 2015, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions below:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: SITE LOCATION PLAN; EXISTING FLOOR & ELEVATIONS PLANS; PROPOSED ELEVATIONS; PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN; PROPOSED SECTION; PROPOSED ROOF PLAN.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural Matter

2. The appeal was submitted in the name of a substitute appellant for the original applicant, Mr M Danks, who has confirmed, in a letter dated 9 September 2016, that he is content for Mr S L Patching to conduct the appeal on his behalf.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character of the host dwelling and the surrounding area, and
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- whether the development makes adequate provision for off-street parking, and the effect of any lack of provision on highway safety, the convenience of road users, and the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

The effect on the character of the host dwelling and the surrounding area

4. The Council does not object to the provision of a first floor to this dwelling, or to the principle of dormers. However, it considers that the dormers proposed would appear disproportionately large in the roof. Given the width of the extension together with its eaves height, it holds that this would give the proposal a top-heavy appearance.
5. The house the subject of this appeal stands on one corner of a crossroads. While Waarden Road contains many bungalows, including the plot to the east of the site, it also contains 2-storey houses. Indeed, the plots on two of the three neighbouring corners of the crossroads contain 2-storey houses. In this height context, the raising of the eaves and ridge of part of the house by 1.2m would not appear at odds with the scale of the surrounding 2-storey houses. Being around 5m from No 192, the uplifted roof would not overpower the scale of the roof of the neighbouring house. It would follow the form and pitch of the existing roof and would not appear disproportionate to the rest of the house. I can identify no harm from the form, volume, or materials of the raised roof or its relationship to the host house or the character of the surrounding area.
6. The verges between the edge of the roof plane and the base of the dormers and between their ridges and the ridge of the main roof would be minimal. However, these confining elements in the design are outweighed by the modest width of each dormer and the substantial gap between them. I appreciate the Council's concern about dormers not dominating the roof plane, but equally, dormers which appear artificially small can appear out of scale with the rest of the building. It seems to me that this proposal has struck a fair balance.
7. I conclude on this issue that the proposal would not have an adverse effect on the character of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. It would not conflict with Policy EC2 of the Castle Point Borough Council Local Plan 1998 (LP) which seeks a high standard of design, and development that does not harm the character of its surroundings. The proposal would have sparse verges above and below the dormers which would be against the guidance in section 7 of the Council's Residential Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document 2013 (RDG) referred to under LP Policy H17. However, the substantial gaps between them would ensure that, overall, the proposal would satisfy RDG section 7 which advises that roof dormers should appear ancillary in the roofscape. For these reasons I do not consider the proposal to be poor design and there is no conflict with paragraph 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (the Framework).

Off-street parking provision, highway safety and the street scene

8. The development would increase the number of bedrooms in the house from one to two, and the Council advises that its parking standards under LP Policy T8 require two parking spaces for dwellings with two or more bedrooms, whereas the house presently has on-plot parking for only one car. It considers that the development would result in additional parking demand which would

- cause danger and inconvenience to road users as well as a cluttered street scene.
9. Whilst I have not been provided with the parking standards to which LP Policy T8 refers, the appellant has shown that it is possible to park two cars on the plot, without affecting the existing soft landscape and planting in the front garden, or its enclosure. This suggests that the development would comply with the Council's parking standard under Policy T8 and the guidance referred to in section 12 of the RDG under LP Policy H17, which advises that parking should not dominate the public realm or have an adverse impact on visual amenity.
 10. In any event, the Framework has a core principle of making the fullest possible use of public transport, walking, and cycling, and advises that parking standards should take account of factors including the accessibility of the development and local car ownership levels. I noted on my visit that the site is around half a mile from Canvey Island town centre which suggests the location is not unsustainable. I did not see any restrictions on parking on the highway in the vicinity of the site, and the occupancy of the street parking was less than 10% of the spaces available.
 11. I appreciate that my visit was on a weekday morning, whereas demand is likely to be higher at the end of the working day and at weekends. However, the amount of space available does not indicate a high degree of car ownership, parking stress, or overload in the locality. I also note the Written Ministerial Statement to Parliament of 25 March 2015 which states that local planning authorities should impose local parking standards only where there is clear and compelling justification that it is necessary to manage their local road network.
 12. I do not consider that the development would result in the displacement of parking onto the street. However, even if this were to be the case, the proposal would not result in unsustainable pressure on the existing on-street parking in the area. I appreciate that the site occupies a corner plot, but it has not been demonstrated that there would be a harmful effect on highway safety in the event of any additional, on-street parking. Equally, the surrounding streets include grass verges beside the footways; in this context the parking of a car on the road would not harm the character or appearance of the area.
 13. I conclude on this issue that the proposal would provide adequate off-street parking, and would not cause demonstrable harm to highway safety, the convenience of road users, or to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would therefore accord with LP Policies H17, and T8 referred to above, as well as LP Policy EC2 which says that the Council will have regard to the need to ensure that all modes of movement are made safe and convenient and to the appearance of spaces around buildings.

Conditions

14. The Council has suggested a number of conditions which it considers would be appropriate were I minded to allow the appeal. I have considered them in the light of the Planning Practice Guidance. In addition to the statutory time limit condition, in the interests of proper planning and for the avoidance of doubt, I have imposed a condition requiring that the development be carried out in accordance with the approved plans. In order to safeguard the appearance of

the host dwelling and the area, a condition requiring the extension to be built in materials which would match the existing dwelling is also necessary.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Patrick Whelan
INSPECTOR