
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 November 2016

by A Napier BA(Hons) MRTPI MIEMA CEnv

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

Decision date: 15 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/D1590/D/16/3157717

75 Sandpiper Close, Shoeburyness, Southend-on-Sea SS3 9YL

- 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 Mrs R Branch against the decision of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/00912/FULH, dated 14 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey side extension at 75 Sandpiper Close, Shoeburyness, Southend-on-Sea SS3 9YL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/00912/FULH, dated 14 April 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 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: DR/15/550/P001, DR/15/550/E001, DR/15/550/E002, DR/15/550/P003 (Proposed Plans) and DR/15/550/P003 (Proposed Elevations).
 - 3) 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.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within an established residential estate, which follows a relatively formal layout, with regularly spaced groups of dwellings and conventional estate roads and footways. However, there is significant variety in the form and pattern of built development within the area, with a range of different house types and a number of different designs. The appeal dwelling forms part of a small group situated adjacent to a relatively modest, but visually important, area of open space. This area contains a number of mature trees and these elements, together with the spaces between and around the
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dwellings, make a valuable and distinctive contribution to the relatively spacious character and visual qualities of the surrounding area.

4. The two-storey extension of the building as proposed would be a significant addition to the dwelling, which would effectively double its size. The appeal dwelling is situated at the end of a short row of semi-detached properties, which appear largely unaltered, and the main elevation of the dwelling faces a similar row opposite, with its end gable facing the road. In common with other properties within the immediate area, a side garden area separates the dwelling from the highway and this is largely enclosed by a high wall. However, unlike elsewhere within the vicinity, the boundary of the appeal site is not adjacent to a grassed verge area, but immediately adjoins the hard surfaced footway adjacent to the road.
5. Notwithstanding the verge opposite, the character of the estate is distinctly less spacious and more functional at this point, with the relationship of this boundary wall to the highway resulting in an increased sense of enclosure and the adjacent road providing access to an enclosed parking area and individual garages for neighbouring dwellings, to the rear of the appeal site. Furthermore, due to the layout and nature of the surrounding development, this part of the estate tends to be experienced in relation to its more immediate environment.
6. Within this context, I consider that the extension of the dwelling as proposed would not diminish the spacious character of the wider area or result in an unacceptable loss of openness. In addition, whilst some longer views of the site are possible, there is a mix of different built form in the locality and, due to the pattern of development within the area, the proposal would largely be seen against other existing buildings, including terraced properties. This would further limit its visual impact within the streetscene.
7. Due to the layout of development, the trees within the open space and the siting of the semi-detached dwellings, most public views of the appeal dwelling in relation to its immediate neighbours are generally oblique and longer views are relatively limited and partially screened. Given this setting, even with the scale of development proposed, I consider that the appeal extension would not unacceptably unbalance the pair of semi-detached dwellings, detract from the regular pattern of development within this small group or be harmful to the visual qualities of the local area.
8. The design details and external materials would match those of the appeal dwelling, which would complement its appearance. Furthermore, for the reasons given above and notwithstanding the scale of the proposal, I consider that it would not be an unacceptably dominant addition to the existing dwelling. For these reasons, it would not adversely affect the relationship of the appeal dwelling to its immediate neighbours or wider surroundings, or be materially out of keeping with the overall character of the area.
9. Accordingly, overall, I conclude that the proposal would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. It would comply with the *Southend-on-Sea Development Management Document 2015* Policy DM1 and would not conflict with the advice within the Council's *Design and Townscape Guide SPD*, which collectively seek to protect local character and appearance. It would also meet the aims of paragraph 17 of the National Planning Policy

Framework, to achieve high quality design and take account of the different roles and character of different areas.

Other matters

10. The Council has not raised concerns about the effect of the proposal on neighbouring living conditions or parking provision within the area and there is nothing in the evidence before me that would lead me to an alternative view in these regards. The appellant has indicated that the proposal would be beneficial to her living conditions and those of her family. However, given my findings above, it is not necessary for me to consider this matter further.
11. Examples of other developments within the area have been drawn to my attention. However, I do not have full details of these other schemes or the background to those decisions. As a result, I am unable to assess whether these other schemes are directly comparable to the appeal proposal, which I have considered on its merits and in light of all representations made.

Conditions and conclusion

12. The Council has suggested a condition requiring the use of matching external materials for the extensions which, in the interests of the character and appearance of the area, is necessary. In addition, for certainty, it is necessary that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans.
13. For the above reasons and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

A Napier

INSPECTOR