

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 April 2017

by Les Greenwood MRTPI

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

Decision date: 2nd May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M1520/D/17/3168672

29 Grandview Road, Thundersley, Benfleet SS7 3JZ

- 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 P Haylock against the decision of Castle Point Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/0725/FUL was refused by notice dated 5 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with front and rear dormers.
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Clarification

1. The proposal includes a substantial first floor extension to the rear, rather than just a rear dormer as stated on the application form (and as quoted above). I have therefore used the more accurate description set out in the Council's refusal notice and the Grounds of Appeal in the formal decision, below.

Decision

2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a first floor rear extension and front dormers in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 16/0725/FUL, dated 20 September 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plan: 3028/3A Sheet 1.
 - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building except as otherwise indicated on the application form.

Main issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the building and this part of Grandview Road.

Reasons

4. Grandview Road is a residential street lined mainly by bungalows of varying designs plus occasional houses. The lofts of many of the bungalows have been converted, often with the use of flat roofed box-type dormer constructions on both front and rear elevations.
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5. 29 Grandview Road is a semi-detached bungalow. Its original hipped roof has been replaced by a hip to gable conversion and it has also previously been extended with a rear dormer and a rear single storey extension. The proposed first floor extension was almost complete at the time of my site visit, so that the application is largely retrospective in nature. The result is a deep, 2 storey, flat roofed rear extension with 2 small pitched roof dormers to the front. The first floor section is clad with boarding to differentiate it from the rendered ground floor section. No 31 next door retains its hipped roof.
6. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document *Residential Design Guidance* (SPD) advises against excessively top heavy roofs or roofs that appear prominent or dominant in the street scene. It furthermore says that the roof of a dwelling needs to be proportionate to the dwelling and in keeping with those surrounding it, particularly where the extension would be to a pair of dwellings.
7. The Council has no objection to the pitched roof front dormers, which are a complementary feature. The previous hip to gable conversion has already reduced the symmetry of the pair of bungalows. Although the new first floor extension is a sizeable and bulky addition, the use of cladding and a step in at the back both help to blend it into the form of the building and the street scene. Within the context of the numerous other extensions on Grandview Road, this one does not appear as being discordant, dominant or harmful in the angled views from the street.
8. The Council refers to an appeal decision for a first floor, flat roofed extension on another bungalow in Thundersley¹. In that case, the bungalow to be extended was one of a series of largely identical semi-detached pairs, which is a much different situation to that at Grandview Road. I have considered this case on its own merits, in light of local circumstances, recognising that a similar development may not be acceptable in other circumstances.
9. I conclude that the proposal does not harm the character and appearance of the building and this part of Grandview Road. It therefore does not conflict with the aims of Castle Point Borough Council Local Plan Policies EC2 and H17 and SPD Policies RDG7 and RDG8, to ensure that extensions are of a high standard of design appropriate to their setting. This is in line with the National Planning Policy Framework's emphasis on securing high quality design that reinforces local distinctiveness.
10. As the development is not yet completed, I impose conditions specifying the relevant plan and external materials to provide certainty and to protect the character and appearance of the area.
11. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Les Greenwood

INSPECTOR

¹ APP/M1520/D/14/2223981