

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 May 2017

by Kenneth Stone BSc Hons DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 23 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/B1550/D/17/3168304
7 Hillview Road, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 7HX

- 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 Miss Vicky Stone against the decision of Rochford District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/0886/FUL, dated 18 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as 'construct two storey rear extension and loft conversion'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, including the setting of the nearby Rayleigh Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The property the subject of this appeal forms one half of a semi-detached pair of bungalows located on sloping ground. The bungalow sits higher than the adjoining half of the pair and therefore has an existing raised ridge line. The surrounding area has a mix of property styles of varying ages with the character created by the variety in styles and forms. The road is an unmade access and the properties are set back from the access with variations in the building line.
 4. The existing bungalow is of modest scale and proportions and the proposed alterations and extensions would add substantially to the scale and bulk of the property. The proposed additions would significantly increase the footprint and bulk of the property. The envelope of the extensions, particularly those to the rear, would appear as awkward additions. The two storey rear addition is offset from the footprint of the existing property and the additions introduce significant areas of flat roof which do not follow through the flank walls of the existing property. The variations in the overall roof profile, providing dormer additions, rear sloping roof, flat sections to join the proposed dormers and intervening space between the existing roof and proposed roof, would appear as poorly conceived and a jumble of additions poorly related to each other and the original form of the building.
 5. The overall scale, mass and bulk of the additions would overwhelm the original property and given the detailed design would sit uncomfortably on that original property. In this regard I consider these would be poor design.
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6. The bungalow although set back from adjoining properties and not holding a particularly prominent location would still be visible in close quarters along Hillview Road, would be visible from neighbouring properties and in glimpsed views from London Hill between properties. In this regard I consider that the poor design would be readily visible and would result in material harm to the character and appearance of the area.
7. Whilst the site is close to Rayleigh Conservation Area, it is screened from it by a tree screen and would be close to open wooded land that forms part of the conservation area. Given that the road is generally residential in character with an eclectic mix of housing of varying ages and styles it would not affect the views into or out of the conservation area and would not therefore affect its setting, character or appearance, which would therefore be preserved.
8. Given the above I conclude that the proposed development would materially harm the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore conflict with policy CP1 of the Rochford District Core Strategy 2011 and Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Rochford District Council Development Management Plan 2014 which collectively require high quality development that has regard to the character of the local area and promotes the character of the area to ensure development positively contributes to the surrounding natural and built environment. This is consistent with the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework in particular the core principles at paragraph 17 and good design at paragraphs 56, 60 and 64. With paragraph 64 advising that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area.

Other matters

9. The appellant argues that the extensions and alterations are the minimum required to achieve the necessary internal space. However good design relates to an appreciation of these two matters and mediates to provide a suitable and acceptable solution. There is no detailed justification of the need for the internal space other than a desire to achieve the maximum internal space and the private needs of the individual rather than any public benefit.
10. The examples of other developments in the locality where larger extensions and new build properties have been introduced does not address the shortcomings of the design of the extensions and alterations the subject of this appeal.

Overall conclusion

11. The proposal is of poor design and would result in material harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area; it would therefore conflict with the development plan, in particular policies CP1, DM1 and DM3 as referred to above. There are no other material considerations to indicate that a decision otherwise should be taken and therefore the proposals are not acceptable.
12. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Kenneth Stone

INSPECTOR