
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 June 2017

by R Norman BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 05 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/D1590/W/17/3168142

143 Green Lane, Eastwood, Southend-on-Sea SS9 5QL

- 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 and Mrs H Siddique against the decision of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/00504/FUL, dated 16 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as creating a new family dwelling.
-

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.

Reasons

3. The site is located on Green Lane and falls within a series of individually designed, large properties on substantial plots, which are set back from the road. When viewed in the context of the surrounding houses on this side of the road, the prevailing form of development is of similar style properties, set well back from the road, with the exception of some forward projecting garages.
 4. The proposed replacement dwelling would introduce an angled form of development with two gable ends at the front. Many neighbouring houses have varied materials and front gables therefore no objections are raised to the design of the dwelling itself. However the proposed gables would be tall and angled towards one another. Even accounting for the set back from the road, the height and the angling of the gable elements would result in an unduly dominant feature amongst the development on this side of the road. There are a number of properties which have gable frontage features; however these are set parallel with the road. I consider that the angling and height of the proposed gables would therefore be at odds with the prevailing form of development and relatively linear layout of the properties. Whilst I have given consideration to the existing vegetation to the site frontage and side boundaries, there would still be instances where the replacement dwelling was visible within the street scene.
-

5. There is some variety in ridge heights amongst the neighbouring dwellings along this side of Green Lane. However, the proposed gables would be in excess of a metre higher than the surrounding properties. Furthermore, although the ridge heights have been reduced from the original submission, the gables would remain approximately 0.8m higher than the ridge of the existing and higher still above the heights of the gables now present. This would result in a dominant development which would be harmful to the visual character and appearance of the area.
6. I have considered the reasons for the design of the dwelling, including the use of energy efficient fabric and on site renewable energy. Paragraph 65 of the National Planning Policy Framework indicates that buildings which promote high levels of sustainability should not be refused planning permission because of concerns over incompatibility with the townscape if the concerns have been mitigated by good design. Whilst there is some variety in design in the street scene, due to the angles and height of the gables, the sustainability benefits of the proposal would not be sufficient to outweigh the visual harm to the surrounding area.
7. Although the proposal significantly increases the overall size of the dwelling, the plot can accommodate the proposed dwelling whilst retaining adequate parking and garden space. The closure of the existing access and the proposed new access would not result in any harm and the proposed brick wall to the site frontage would not harm the character of the area given the mix of boundary treatments present.
8. There are examples of forward sited garaging in the surrounding area including on the appeal site. The proposal would replace this with a garage and study with a guest bedroom, bathroom and storage area at first floor level. I note that there are existing similar developments which have storage above and as such this element of the proposal would not be out of keeping with the surrounding area. The existing separation distances between the proposed garage and the neighbouring dwelling, No 149, are sufficient to prevent any adverse impacts on the outlook from this property.
9. The proposal would therefore conflict with the need for good design and the reinforcement of local distinctiveness found in Section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework. It would also fail to comply with the requirements of Policies KP2 and CP4 of the Development Plan Document 1: Core Strategy, 2007, and Policy DM1 of the Development Plan Document 1: Development Management, 2015, which all seek to ensure that development respects and enhances the character and appearance of the surrounding area, as well as the Design and Townscape Guide SPD, 2009.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, and having regard for all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Norman

INSPECTOR