
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 August 2017

by Rory MacLeod BA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 11th September 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/D1590/D/17/3175257

14 Pinewood Avenue, Leigh-on-sea SS9 5PH

- 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 Colin Manning against the decision of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 17/00096/FULH, dated 3 May 2016 (and dated 23 January 2017 on the appeal form), was refused by notice dated 20 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are (1) the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area and (2) the policy requirement to retain accessible and adaptable accommodation for older residents.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to a single storey semi-detached bungalow paired with 16 Pinewood Avenue. It forms part of a row of four identical bungalows with nos. 18 and 20 but the road otherwise has a mixed residential character. There is a single chalet bungalow at 12 Pinewood Avenue that has been enlarged by a side dormer facing the appeal site. The majority of dwellings on this side of the road are two storey houses of varying design. On the opposite side of the road are mainly single storey bungalows interspaced with a few two storey houses.
4. It is proposed to enlarge the property by constructing two large dormers. One would be front facing, approximately 5m wide, centrally positioned and set back from the eaves. The other would face the rear garden and would be some 7m wide occupying virtually the full width of the bungalow; it would be set just above the rear eaves line and would incorporate a Juliette balcony. The submitted plans show bedrooms and bathrooms to be provided at first floor level accessed via a new staircase through the present ground floor bathroom.
5. The two dormers would unbalance the appearance of the pair of semi-detached bungalows. They would also be out of keeping with character of the row of four bungalows in which the site is set and with other bungalows in the vicinity of the site. Whilst there are some chalet bungalows built with front facing dormers nearby, these are generally smaller than that proposed. Front dormers have

been added to some single storey bungalows nearby, but the majority remain unaltered. The rear dormer would have a box-like appearance with a flat roof occupying most of the present rear facing roof slope.

6. In these respects the proposal would conflict with Policies KP2 and CP4 of the Southend-on-Sea Core Strategy (2007) that promote quality design that respects the character and scale of existing neighbourhoods. It would also be contrary to Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Development Management Document (July 2015) (DMD) that provide more detailed prescription in relation to good design in the urban realm and specifically in relation to bungalows; there would also be conflict with the Design and Townscape Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in relation guidance on roof extensions and dormer windows.
7. The appellant has drawn my attention to dormers close to the appeal site at 9, 12 and 33 Pinewood Close. I have no information on the dates or particular circumstances of their construction but these structures and other dormers nearby now form part of the character of the area. The Council infers that these structures were erected prior to the present planning policy regime. Their presence however, does not alter my conclusions on the scale and appearance of the dormers now proposed at the appeal site and the harm that would arise to the character of the area in relation to current planning policies.
8. Policies DM3 and DM8 of the DMD seek to resist the loss of bungalows in the interests of retaining accommodation suitable for the needs of Southend's older residents. The borough has a particularly large and growing proportion of elderly residents and the policies point towards the use of Lifetime Home Standards to ensure the retention of suitable accommodation and in particular bungalows for their needs. The proposed loft conversion would transform a modest two bedroom bungalow into a large four bedroom two storey dwelling. It would result in a benefit of enhanced accommodation to meet the aspirations of the appellant, but in the absence of details relating to internal arrangements, there would be in conflict with these policies. Other than the presence of dormers nearby, no evidence has been submitted to support an exception being made to this policy requirement.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons set out, I conclude that the proposal would have a significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area and be in conflict with the policy requirement to retain accessible and adaptable accommodation for older residents. As such, the appeal is dismissed.

Rory MacLeod

INSPECTOR