



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 December 2019

by G Pannell BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19th December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/D/19/3236328

53 Catharine Close, Chafford Hundred, Grays RM16 6QH

- 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 & Mrs Gowrley against the decision of Thurrock Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00891/HHA, dated 11 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 8 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is construction of loft conversion consisting of rear dormer and front veluxs.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for loft conversion with rear dormer, three front roof lights and side window at 53 Catharine Close, Chafford Hundred, Grays RM16 6QH in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/00891/HHA, dated 11 June 2019, and the plans submitted with it, 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 plan: RM16-6QH-53-01D Existing and Proposed Plans. Sections and 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.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the planning application form. However, in Part E of the appeal form the description has been changed to the one that the Council used to deal with the proposal and I have therefore used this in my formal decision as I consider it to better reflect the development proposed.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. 53 Catharine Close is a detached two storey dwelling within a residential housing estate, comprising similar two storey dwellings. Whilst the estate is modern, with no outstanding architectural merit, the uniformity in the design of the dwellings is a notable feature that adds to the character of the area. The rear boundary of no. 53 runs parallel with Arterial Road North. This road has a wide footway and verge and is separated from the properties in Catharine Close by a landscape buffer.
5. The proposed rear dormer would be sited centrally within the roof slope and would be inset from each end of the roof, set below the ridge of the main roof and would face onto the rear garden of the property and views beyond to the Arterial Road North.
6. The site is located to the south of the Arterial Road North, and as noted in the Council's report there is at present significant screening and distance between the rear elevation and the road. Whilst I note that the screening is not protected by any tree preservation order, it forms part of an established landscaped buffer which extends for some length along Arterial Road North.
7. Given its position next to an arterial road, there is no reason to suggest that it would not remain in place in perpetuity to serve its intended purpose of offering screening and protection to the residents in Catharine Close.
8. Traffic travelling along Arterial Road North, noting its overall width would only experience glimpsed views, if any, of the rear roof slope of properties in Catharine Close. Pedestrians would also be shielded from views having regard to the overall height and extent of the landscaped buffer.
9. Having observed the level of screening present during the winter months I consider that the rear roof slope should be categorised, under the Thurrock Residential Alterations and Extensions Design Guide 2017 (RAE), as a rear roof slope that is not visible from a public space. In these circumstances Table 1 of the RAE confirms that dormer windows are acceptable in principle where the proposal avoids overlooking, subject to size restrictions.
10. I am satisfied that the development would accord with the requirements of the RAE and its size and scale would not be overly dominant or overbearing. Although the surrounding area is not characterised by dormer windows, the introduction of a dormer window would still contribute positively to the area as the development would be subservient and in keeping with the character and appearance of the existing dwelling.
11. In conclusion, I have identified no harm from the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, which complies with policies CSTP22 and PMD2 of the Thurrock Local Development Framework, Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development 2015. These policies require development to be of a high quality design which contributes positively to the character of the area. The development would also accord with the guidance contained within the RAE.

Conditions

12. The Council has suggested conditions which I have considered against the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice

Guidance. As well as the standard implementation condition, I have imposed a condition to ensure that the proposal is built in accordance with the approved plans to provide certainty and a condition in respect of materials to safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

G. Pannell

INSPECTOR