



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 February 2020

by M Chalk BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/X1545/D/19/3242333

Inchmerle, Esplanade, Mayland CM3 6AW

- 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 Walmsley against the decision of Maldon District Council.
 - The application Ref HOUSE/MAL/19/00879, dated 14 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 8 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as "single storey rear extension and re-modelling of the first floor, ridge height to match existing house".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue is the effect of the development proposed on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The existing detached house lies within a row of houses of diverse appearance but broadly consistent height and scale, all of which are set well back from the highway with long front gardens and their front elevations facing the estuary.
4. The Council only refers to the alterations to the roof in its reason for refusal. Having visited the site and considered the effects of the proposed development, I agree that there would be no unacceptable harm to the character of the dwelling and surrounding area or other harm from the other elements proposed.
5. The proposed central gable to the front elevation would be set behind the two larger gables, and largely screened from view by them other than when the property is viewed from directly in front. However, the eaves of the central gable would be set above those of the other two gables, and it would feature a tall, narrow window out of keeping with the style of glazing proposed elsewhere to the front elevation. I consider that it would be an incongruous and dominant feature in the front elevation of the property. During my site visit I viewed neighbouring properties in Esplanade from the street and saw several examples of front dormers and gables. These were generally simple in form and

arrangement and while there is considerable variety in appearance in the street scene, I consider that the proposed arrangement of front gables would result in a cluttered and inconsistent appearance out of keeping in the wider area.

6. The 3 proposed rear dormers would individually each be of modest width, but the proposed central rear dormer would project over the single-storey rear extension. Cumulatively I consider that the scale of the proposed dormers would be out of keeping with the relatively simple character of the existing property, particularly when viewed from the rear. While the siting of the dormers to the rear of the property would result in limited public visibility, I consider that overall this element of the development proposed would also be harmful to the character of the property. The appellants have argued that they are constrained by extending an existing dwelling, but I do not consider that this justifies a design that would be harmful to its appearance.
7. The proposed balcony would be seen within the context of the house as a whole, and in particular as part of the first-floor front elevation. Subject to use of appropriate materials, I do not consider that in itself the balcony proposed would be harmful to the character of the property.
8. The appellants have suggested that previous extensions to the appeal property have resulted in a lack of coherence and visual quality. Be that as it may, I do not consider that this justifies a development that would be harmful overall to the character of the property and wider area.
9. Having considered the above matters I have found harm to the character and appearance of the property and wider area from the proposed front gables and harm to the character and appearance of the property from the rear dormer windows. The development proposed therefore conflicts with Policies D4 and H1 of the Maldon District Approved Local Development Plan 2014-2029 July 2017. These policies, among other things, seek to ensure that extensions to dwellings maintain, and where possible enhance, the character and sustainability of the original building and the surrounding area.

Other Matters

10. The appellants have referred to support from neighbouring residents and the lack of objection either from local residents or the Parish Council to the appeal proposal. While the lack of objections is a neutral consideration, I have given some weight to the support from existing residents. However, the development proposed would be a permanent feature of the site, and there is no guarantee that future residents would continue to support the development. I do not therefore consider that this support outweighs the harm that I have identified.
11. The appellants have drawn my attention to examples of approvals for extensions to existing dwellings and replacement dwellings within Esplanade. I have had regard to these approvals and during my visit I looked at each property in the Esplanade street scene from the road. I note that there are elements of the approvals identified that are similar to the appeal proposal, but each specific example is different overall to the proposal before me. The weight that I can give these other examples is therefore limited. In any case, each proposal must be judged on its own merits, which I have done here.

12. The appellants have also stated that the appeal proposal would improve the sustainability of the existing building. I have given this some weight, but do not consider that it outweighs the harm that I have identified.

Conclusion

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

M Chalk

INSPECTOR