



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 July 2020

by Martin Small, BA (Hons), BPI, DipCM, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/D/20/3249751
73 Hope Road, West End, SO30 3GE

- 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 Rakkar against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: H/19/87071 dated 16 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 28 February 2020.
 - The development proposed is single-storey front extension, raising ridge height of property and 1 no. front dormer window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The Council's reason for refusal refers to Policy DM1 of the Submitted Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 (2018) (SEBLP). From the evidence before me, the Examination of this Plan is still underway. Paragraph 48 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) explains that weight may be given to relevant policies in emerging plans according to the stage of preparation of the emerging plan, the extent to which there are unresolved objections and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the Framework.
3. Although the SEBLP has reached an advanced stage in its preparation the independent examination has yet to be concluded. The consistency of Policy DM1 with the Framework is a matter for the examining Inspector and I have not been advised whether or not there are any unresolved objections to this policy. I therefore give only moderate weight to this emerging policy in my determination of this appeal.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. Hope Road is part of an established residential area characterised by modest detached and semi-detached bungalows set back from the road predominantly with pitched and hipped roofs, front gardens and driveways to the side. The form of the roofs of the dwellings minimises their bulk. The appeal property is characteristic of the area.

6. I observed during my site visit that some properties have dormer windows and other alterations to their roofs, including those to which the appellant draws my attention, but that the substantial majority of the roofs of the properties are not extended to the front or side elevations. Although not all the roof forms in the area are exactly the same, there is a large degree of homogeneity which contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area such that the existing dormers and other alterations appear incongruous rather than part of the established character.
7. The proposed development includes raising the roof of the appeal property, substantially extending the roof to the rear and extending it to the front over a proposed single storey extension. The proposals also include a dormer window to the front elevation, the replacement of an existing window in the side elevation with a new entrance door and full-height glazed bi-fold doors in the rear elevation.
8. The increased roof height in combination with the rear and front extensions would substantially increase the bulk of the roof of the appeal property and alter its form. The resulting substantially extended roof form would dominate the dwelling and be at odds with the more modest roof forms of the majority of the dwellings in the area. These effects would be visible from Hope Road and from St James Road to the south-west of the appeal property and particularly so from the junction of St James Road with Hope Road.
9. The proposed dormer window would be smaller than existing dormers on other properties and it would relate well in size, positioning and design to the existing roof form. However, it would add to the overall bulk of the proposed roof extension and would be an incongruous feature in the street scene given the predominant lack of dormers on front-facing roof slopes in the area.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would thus conflict with saved Policy 59.BE of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review 2001-2011 (2006) and emerging Policy DM1 of the SEBLP, which, amongst other things, seek to protect the character and appearance of a locality.
11. The proposed development would result in minimal social and economic benefits and would fail to protect the built environment. Whilst the proposal would make efficient use of the site and developments should optimise the potential of a site to accommodate an appropriate amount of development, these should not be at the expense of maintaining an area's prevailing character. The proposal would conflict in this respect with paragraph 127 c) of the Framework which, amongst other things, requires planning decisions to ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

Fallback

12. The appellant has referred to the ability to construct a hip to gable roof extension under permitted development rights. However, I have no drawings before me to demonstrate such an extension. Whilst such an extension would be clearly visible in the street scene, I am not persuaded that it would be significantly more harmful than the proposal before me. Furthermore, no substantive evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the appellant

would pursue this option were planning permission to be refused for the development proposed.

13. I therefore give little weight to the fallback position in my determination of this appeal. I find that it is not sufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified above and consequent conflict with the development plan.

Other considerations

14. I acknowledge the appellant's desire to provide improved accommodation for himself and his family. However, I have no evidence that the existing accommodation is substandard, and this desire does not justify the harm I have identified.
15. The proposed development would not be materially harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties, including No. 27 St James Road. It would not result in the harmful loss of garden area nor parking spaces for the appeal property and would be constructed sustainably. However, these represent the absence of planning harm rather than benefits of the proposal. I have no evidence that the proposed bi-fold doors would result in a reduction in the use of energy. I therefore give all these matters neutral weight in my decision.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, and having regard to the other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Small

INSPECTOR