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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 September 2020 by Ifeanyi Chukwujekwu BSc MSc MIEMA CEnv AssocRTPI

### Decision by Chris Preston BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 October 2020

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### Appeal Ref: APP/N4205/D/20/3257574

#### 9 Erskine Close, Bolton BL3 4UG

- 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 Rob Gee against the decision of Bolton Council.
  - The application Ref 08277/20, dated 22 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 31 July 2020.
  - The development proposed is conversion of a detached bungalow residential dwelling into a detached residential dwelling with 2 storey side extension, first floor extension with duo-pitched roof.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

### Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area with regards to scale, massing, form, architecture and removal of trees.

### Reasons for the Recommendation

4. No. 9 is a detached bungalow located at the end of Erskine Close within a residential estate. The Close rises upwards from the junction with Blairmore Drive and the appeal property is the last of a row of five bungalows of similar design. Although the property is set at a slightly splayed angle from the other bungalows it clearly reads as part of the street scene dominated by single storey dwellings. The roofs of the properties gradually step up the hillside matching the contour of the road thereby creating a pleasing rhythm on this side of the street. Detached two-storey dwellings with side garages line the other side of the road.
5. The predominant character on the street and surrounding area is of dwellings with full width pitched roofs with the gable elevation fronting the road. Though the host property is tilted to an angle, the gable elevation is still presented to the street frontage to match the prevailing style. The area has a spacious feel

due to the spacing between properties and the open space which runs past the front and side of the appeal site. The low-density nature of the bungalows is an essential ingredient in that spacious character.

6. The introduction of a two-storey dwelling would be at odds with the pattern of development with bungalows on this side of the street. The proposal would have significantly more width and depth than the existing property and coupled with the conversion to two-storeys, would look out of place against the run of bungalows on that side of the road. When viewed from Erskine Close the increased scale would be particularly noticeable on the skyline and would jar awkwardly against the established rhythm formed by the gradually rising rooflines of the bungalows. When viewed from the open space to the front and side the property would appear far more imposing than the present bungalow which was clearly designed to reflect the low density and open character of the estate.
7. Also, by virtue of its design, the proposal would have a markedly different appearance than any other property in the area. The dwelling would have a hipped roof, which would contrast with the gable roof style in the area and the fenestration would be of an entirely different design. The appellant contends that every house on the street is different and has referred to No.12 Erskine Close which has a pair of columns as part of the front porch extension. However, by virtue of its size, this front porch could have been constructed without requiring planning permission. No.12 also has a first-floor extension on top of the side garage which is subservient to the host building. I observed on my visit to the site that regardless of a few minor extensions to properties on the street, properties on both sides still bear similarity in design and the proposal would be an incongruous addition to the street in this context.
8. The appellant has also referred to other developments on other streets in the area namely Nos 11 and 13 Birchfield Grove, Nos 16 and 14 Langside Drive, Nos 167 and 165 Armadale Road, Nos 1 and 3 Crossford Drive, Nos 164 and 166 Armadale Road and Nos 42 and 44 Kinross Drive where neighbouring properties do not match each other in fenestration and design. However, the fact that other properties do not match one another elsewhere is not evidence that those examples cause harm to the character of the areas in question. In some circumstances house styles can be varied without causing harm. The examples referred to are primarily differing styles of dwellings in streets of two storey houses.
9. The proposal before me is notably different as it relates to the significant extension of a bungalow to a much larger two-storey dwelling. As set out, the site is extremely prominent at the head of a row of similar bungalows adjacent to public open space.
10. The proposal would appear more prominent and at odds with its surroundings based on its scale, massing, form and design. For the reasons explained, the proposal would fail to reflect the characteristics of its particular context and would cause harm accordingly. Reference to other examples in different contexts does not alter my conclusion in that regard.
11. It is acknowledged that the removal of the Conifer trees<sup>1</sup> would not require permission as they are not protected. However, this would make the proposal

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<sup>1</sup> Drwng No KDSEC03

more visible and prominent when viewed from the street. The additional width of the proposal may not be noticeable from the road given that it would be the side elevation that would be presented to the street. However, it would be seen from numerous public vantage points from footpaths which cross the open space and from those angles it would contrast with the scale of surrounding properties. From the street the side elevation would be a two-story dwelling with hipped roof and a long chimney column which would be at odds with the row of bungalows on that side of the street, as well as the two-storey dwellings on the opposite side.

12. Taking all the above points together, I find that the scale, massing, form and architectural design of the proposed detached residential dwelling with two-storey side extension, first floor extension with duo-pitched roof would harm the character and appearance of the street scene. The other considerations advanced do not outweigh the harm which would be caused by the proposal. Accordingly, there would be conflict with the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and policies CG3 and OA4 of Bolton's Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2011).
13. These policies amongst other things seek to ensure that new development are compatible with the surrounding area, in terms of scale, massing, grain, form, architecture, street enclosure, local materials and landscape treatment including hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatment.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

14. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Ifeanyi Chukwujekwu*

APPEALS PLANNING OFFICER

### **Inspector's Decision**

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report, and on that basis, I agree that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Chris Preston*

INSPECTOR