

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 October 2020

by J Bell-Williamson MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/X1545/D/20/3253596

56 East End Road, Bradwell-On-Sea, Essex CM0 7PT

- 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 Aaron Withers against the decision of Maldon District Council.
 - The application Ref HOUSE/MAL/19/00736, dated 26 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 26 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is a two storey extension to the front of the property, extending the kitchen on the ground floor and the master bedroom on the first floor.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey semi-detached dwelling in a residential road of mixed dwelling types.
 4. Policy D1 of the Maldon District Approved Local Development Plan 2014-2029 (the Local Plan) concerns design quality and the built environment. It requires development to respect and enhance the character and local context, and make a positive contribution against a number of criteria, including architectural style, use of materials, detailed design features and construction methods. Policy H4 of the Local Plan concerns the effective use of land. With regard to development which includes the extension to a building, as in this case, it requires amongst other things that the proposal should maintain, and where possible enhance, the character and sustainability of the original building and the surrounding area.
 5. Despite the different dwelling types within this part of East End Road, a significant number of properties are arranged in small but distinct groups within which there is a good degree of uniformity of character and appearance. This is the case with regard to the bungalows directly opposite the appeal site and the group of semi-detached dwellings immediately to the west. These have front-facing 'catslide' roofs with a front dormer window. No 56 similarly forms part of
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a small group together with Nos 57 to 59. These properties have a consistent design and appearance across each pair of dwellings, comprising a regular two storey form with a dual pitched roof with gables to the sides and a front single storey garage across half the width of the dwelling. Some dwellings have a single storey addition in the form of an extended kitchen beside the garage.

6. Due to the staggered building line caused by the bend in East End Road, Nos 56 and 57 are set well back on their plots with long front gardens. Due to the open aspect to the front, both dwellings are readily visible within the street scene.
7. The proposed extension would be the same depth as the existing single storey garage but would include an upper storey with a gable. While this would be subordinate to the scale of the host dwelling, the two storey extension and forward-facing gable would introduce a significantly different design element into the small, largely uniform group of which No 56 is a part.
8. As well as the original design of the dwellings, part of the consistency of the appearance of this group is provided by the materials, which are brick at ground floor level and tiles to the upper part. The use of light grey timber cladding across the whole of the extended and original frontage of the appeal property would contrast unfavourably with this largely consistent appearance of the group of dwellings. It would further draw attention to the uncharacteristic extended upper storey, which would unbalance the pair of semi-detached dwellings. As such, through a combination of its design, position and external finish, the extension would appear as a prominent and incongruous addition within the street scene.
9. The appellant refers to a similar form of extension on a nearby road, Bate-Dudley Drive. However, this example illustrates the unbalancing effect that a two storey front extension can have on a pair of largely uniform semi-detached dwellings. As such, it should not be seen as a positive precedent for the appeal proposal. Moreover, the extension to No 1 Bate-Dudley Drive is finished in brick and is less prominent in the street scene in this respect than would be the case with the external material proposed for the extension to the appeal property. Similarly, the extension to No 54 close to the appeal property also unbalances the pair of dwellings, but this extension includes a similar roof design and dormer to the adjacent dwellings to the west. It also utilises more visually sympathetic materials than the extension to No 56 would.
10. Accordingly, for the reasons given, I conclude that the proposed extension would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policies D1 and H4 of the Local Plan, referred to above. These policies are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), particularly section twelve concerning good design.

Other Matters

11. I have had regard to the appellant's contention that the external cladding material is thermally efficient and would have environmental benefits. While I acknowledge that this is an important consideration to which I give weight, I note also what paragraph 9 of the Framework says with regard to such considerations: planning policies and decisions should play an active role in

guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area. In this case, for the above reasons, the form of extension proposed would harmfully affect local character in conflict with the development plan. As such, these environmental considerations do not outweigh this permanent harm and do not alter the overall conclusion.

12.I acknowledge that there were no objections to the proposal. However, given the permanent nature of the change proposed and the conflict with development plan policies, this fact does not change the above findings or overall conclusion.

Conclusion

13.For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, it is concluded that the appeal should not succeed.

J Bell-Williamson

INSPECTOR